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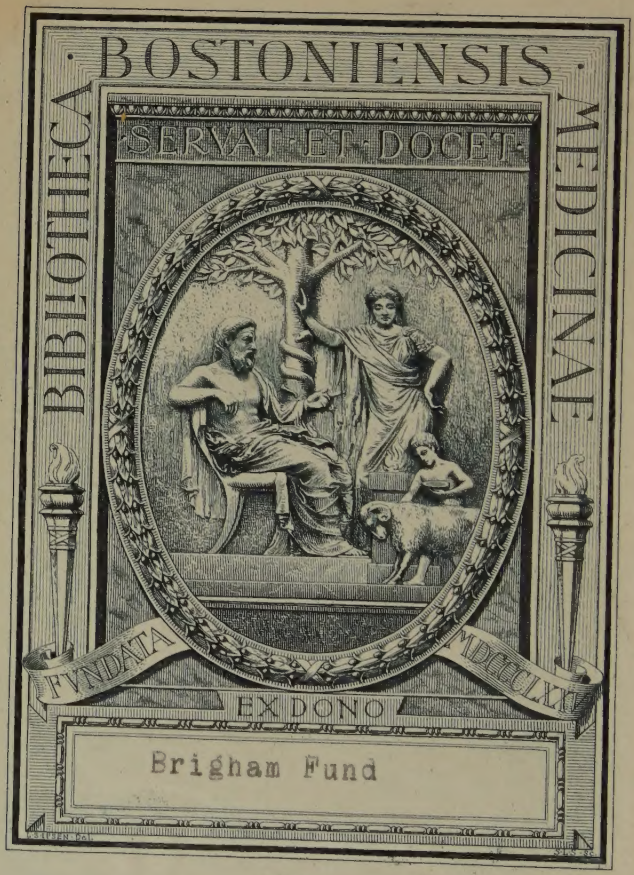
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DAVID CHARTERS

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1864–1894

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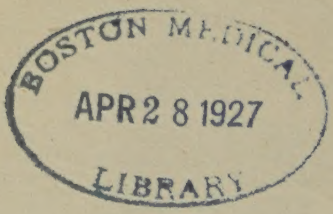

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INTRODUCTORY

The Kikuyu Mission is pre-eminent in interest to Scots among all foreign missions. As every one knows who is interested in it, it started at Kibwezi some one hundred and sixty miles nearer the coast. It was in the beginning an Independent Mission and the mysterious disappearance in 1894 of its first Superintendent, David Charters, while still a young man, created a great sensation at the time. His fate remains unsolved though so many years have passed. It seems strange that no book has yet been compiled dealing with the life of Charters, the reason may be that he was under thirty when his career was cut short, that he was only two years in charge of the Mission and that the subsequent change both of locality and of the governing body led to the work of the first pioneers being overlooked; those who came later dating the origin of the Mission from its start at Kikuyu. Nevertheless Charters crowded into the years while he was rising to his prime, an amount of experience and travel that few of us are lucky enough to get in much longer lives.

He was not destined for the Church from his early years as has been the case with many eminent Scotsmen; he was never ordained and his Mission work was reached by a devious road, beginning as an engineer, and going on as explorer, and by way of medicine; therefore he was extremely well fitted for the varied and hazardous life of a pioneer in a new Mission field among tribes

then very little known. The time he spent in Kenya (then British East Africa), not as working instructor only, but taking a hand in all there was to do as road-maker, gardener, doctor, carpenter, and store-keeper, is described in his own letters, which are here published for the first time.

These letters were collected by Dr. Donald Fraser of Paisley, but pressure of other work prevented his carrying out his idea of arranging and editing them at the time, and they were set aside and forgotten, until many years afterwards, when Dr. Fraser left his medical practice, and retired to the country, when they turned up in the removal, having been lying all the time in an old bag in a lumber room. Some of them, as might be expected, are to Charters' own near relations, but those that have been preserved are mainly to Dr. Oliver Flett, the far-seeing, gentle-hearted Baptist from the Orkneys, and to his wife and her sister, Mrs. Fraser, among whom Charters had found a second home in Paisley.

The letters tell only of his actual experience in Africa, and it has been necessary to supplement them by some narrative of the rest of his life collected from the reminiscences of those who knew him.

From his work as engineer's apprentice on the Clyde among a hundred boys of like antecedents, David Charters broke away and went, under the Baptist Missionary Society, to the Congo, where he came in contact with Stanley, who made a tremendous impression on him. He went on an expedition up the Congo with Stanley, and after that came home full of the idea of getting a Medical Degree so as to be able to take up Mission work effectively, for with Mission work in Africa he rightly considered healing of the body must

precede any attempt at healing of the mind. Lady Stanley, writing of him after many years, says :

" I well remember David Charters although time has blurred the image of him. I remember Stanley was much interested in him and his work. Stanley, if I remember right, told me this young man was fitting himself for his mission work quite wonderfully, that he had studied in an ophthalmic hospital so as to be able to help the natives by healing, and that he was a doctor.

" When Dr. Charters came to see us the picture I have is of a young alert man with dark hair and eyes, a charming, winning expression and a sense of humour."

It is well to have some sort of mental picture of the subject of any biography, and this could hardly be bettered.

Charters' ambition was achieved, as will be told, and he was appointed First Superintendent of the Mission of Kibwezi, in East Africa, thus going from one side of the continent to the other. This Mission was founded by the Directors of the Chartered Company, but it was later transferred to Kikuyu, and became one of the principal Presbyterian Missions in the world.

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DAVID CHARTERS

CHAPTER I

THE BOY AND HIS BOOK

David Charters was born on the 11th November, 1864. He was a native of the proud city of Glasgow, and was therefore reared under the inspiring motto, "Let Glasgow flourish by the preaching of Thy word," which has probably been responsible for sending more men forth to the harvest of the Mission field than is ever suspected. Young and ardent minds take an impress not easily effaced in later years.

Charters the elder was an ironmoulder, and one of the moving spirits in forming the "Iron-Moulders' Association," at the very beginning of the Trade Union movement. He was of a generation that began work early, and at eleven was serving an apprenticeship in the Phœnix Iron Works, Garscube Road, Glasgow. Thus he was not the sort of man to encourage idleness in his sons, or allow them to cultivate any spirit of luxury. At twenty-one he was a foreman moulder; and during the Crimean War he was one of those who made cannon, shot and shell for the combatants. Later on for a short time in Liverpool he had charge of heavy castings used for barge engines for the Navy and Mercantile Marine. It was while he lived in Liverpool that his Association

brought him back to Glasgow to fight a case against the employers in a Glasgow firm, which shows he was a moving spirit of his class and not merely one of the rank and file.

Though he can have had very little education, the elder Charters had a shrewd mind ; and by the time his son David was in his teens, he was in charge of a foundry at Polmadie, employed principally in making dynamos. David brought home from the library of the Mechanics' Institute, then recently opened, a queer old book on metallurgy and mechanics. Charters read this, and gathered from it an unusual method of mixing metals, which he experimented with for the making of dynamos. The Managing Director of the Polmadie foundry was struck with the idea, and tried it for himself, but the results were disastrous. Thereupon, with a distinct lack of justice he asked Charters to look out for another berth. There was not at that time much difficulty in a skilled man's obtaining such work, and Charters was soon successful.

However, before his new contract was actually clinched, two of the directors from the Polmadie firm called on him, and expressed their regret at what had happened. They had reason to believe that if Charters himself had carried out the experiments instead of the Managing Director's taking them over, they would have been successful, so they came humbly, cap in hand as the saying is, to ask him to return. With Scottish caution Charters would not at once consent, and when he did, stipulated for a rise and got it, though to our notions it was not much of a rise, being only two pounds a month extra.

He had six children altogether, three boys and three

girls, brought up frugally enough, but with that kindly and anxious severity which has moulded so many fine Scottish men and women. David was the eldest son, and he and his younger brother James kept up a singularly close friendship. Mrs. Charters was a typical Scots mother, singularly undemonstrative but with deep feelings and great tenacity of purpose. She was a truly good woman, and kept an ideal before her instead of letting herself be submerged beneath all the worries and cares of a large household run upon small means. James remembers his mother frequently quoting the words "A charge I have to keep, a God to glorify." Her most potent influence on her sons was in the direction of teaching them self-help; she never encouraged them to come to her with their small every-day difficulties, but insisted they should face them steadily themselves.

In after years David used of her a phrase which might be truly said by many a son of a good Scots mother, "She never praised me, but often scolded and criticised." There was none of the disastrous sloppiness of treatment too often found in English homes nowadays.

That David, with all his reading, was a mischievous boy like any other, is shown in the story of the pot of jam, which he often quoted in after years as showing what a reprobate he was in his youth.

An aunt had sent some jam of her own making to Mrs. Charters, who put the jar on the table while she went out to do some shopping. The two Charters boys, and their cousin who had been the messenger, were left alone in the room with the jam. It was David who took the lead in suggesting they should "sup the jam," which was done, and worse still they afterwards filled

the jar with a scouring cloth and fastened it up as it had been at first. It was only a few days later that the consequences came home to the culprits, for Mrs. Charters got out the jam, proposing to do honour to a friend who had called. What happened to David may be gathered from this extract in a letter of his written much later.

" When we were all together at home we sometimes went so far as nearly to drive our good mother mad. Then came the retribution, when we boys overdid the fun, and I have often thought an extra share of the strap or the cane fell to me on most of these occasions. Possibly that's why I'm now what they call ' Mother's boy.' I love her best because she whacked me most, on the same principle that the more you beat a dog the better it likes you."

The Charters family moved to Edinburgh in the early 'seventies. They lived in Bonnington Road, off Leith Walk, and the boys were sent first to Dr. Bell's school in Leith and then to Pilrig public school, where David, who had good ability, took most of the prizes.

The elder Charters showed his originality of mind in becoming owner of the first steam omnibus which ran between the Register House, Edinburgh, and Portobello and Musselburgh. One day the driver lost control of the steering gear, and the bus headed for the door of a shop, carrying away some of the masonry. The vehicle itself suffered considerable damage, but was nevertheless sold for a sum sufficient to reimburse Mr. Charters and pay damages.

When David was only twelve years old the family returned to Glasgow, and it was here the boy found the true delight of reading, borrowing books from the

Mechanics' Institute as stated earlier. It was thus he got hold of the " Life of Livingstone," which impressed itself on him tremendously, and sowed the first seeds of that desire to travel, which he was afterwards able to gratify. In connection with this book a story is told how one day, after reading it, the young enthusiast sat with his head inside the oven, explaining to his horrified mother, when he withdrew a scarlet face, that he wanted to go out to Africa as a missionary and was trying if he could stand the heat.

CHAPTER II

THE YOUNG ENGINEER

THE family lived in the Anderston district of Glasgow, where many of the streets run into the region of masts and hulls, and the smoking of funnels and busy gangways of the vessels, loading and departing, are a familiar sight. John Charters, David's uncle, was engineer in an iron steamer on the Clyde, a little vessel called the *Fairy Queen*, built as early as 1828, only sixteen years after Henry Bell's epoch-making steamer the *Comet*.

It seems natural that both David and James should have been apprenticed to a trade carried on outside their very doors, especially as they must have had the love and understanding of engines in their very blood. David was at first apprenticed to the firm of Inglis, and while he was hard at it all day, he went to evening classes both at the Andersonian College and the School of Science and Art. In a later letter he says, that notwithstanding his classes, all the Euclid he ever learned he taught himself, getting a rough board and blackening it, and practising the figures on it, so that at last he had mastered the first three books. He was very keen on obtaining his certificate, and never missed a class if he could help it. It was owing to a misunderstanding over this and his consequent refusal to work overtime that the term of his first apprenticeship was curtailed. But forty other lads were attending evening

classes, and they all went on strike over the same point. David had then a chance of being reinstated, but as he had meantime passed on as apprentice to another firm, that of Barclay Curle, he did not return. While with Curle he helped to put the engine into the second *Meg Merrilees*, one of the early Clyde steamboats, and went in her for her trial trip.

He took the highest degree then possible at the Technical College, and received certificates from the City and Guilds of London Institute of Mechanical Engineering in 1883, and from the College of Science and Art (later the Glasgow and West of Scotland Technical College) in 1884, for Theoretical Mechanics applied to mechanics and steam. He was also employed for about a year in the Caledonian Locomotive Works at St. Rollox.

In matters of religion the Charters had strong convictions. They had at first gone to the Congregational Church in Claremont Street (now " Trinity ") associated with the names of Dr. Pulsford and Dr. John Hunter. In 1879, however, Mr. and Mrs. Charters became convinced of the truth of the Baptist position, and joined Adelaide Place Church in Bath Street. There David was baptised by Dr. Culross when he was twenty-one. He took up work in the Sunday school too, but though he naturally followed his parents' lead in these matters he always was ready to question and enquire for himself, a trait brought out in two lines he once scribbled on a tombstone. Seeing that the original epitaph ran :—

" What you are now so once was I
Therefore prepare to follow me,"

he wrote below :—

" To follow you I'm not content
Unless I know which way you went."

It was the year after his baptism that the following heading appeared over an advertisement in the *Baptist Missionary Herald*—

> "THE CONGO MISSION. Wanted a missionary with engineering experience."

The Congo Mission of the Baptist Missionary Society was still on its "trial trip." Africa was being opened up month by month. Almost visibly the map was being filled in on the Dark Continent under the eyes of those who cared to follow its development. Till the later 'seventies most of the missions had been on the coast, but various pioneers in the Mission field had agreed with Livingstone that it would be healthier to leave these "fever-stricken, trade-cursed" areas and go inland. Special expeditions were therefore being undertaken to discover suitable districts in the interior for the establishment of stations.

In 1877 a rich, old, quaintly mannered gentleman of Leeds, Mr. Robert Arthington, called the attention of the Baptist Missionary Society to a part of Africa within fairly easy distance of places where stations were already established "on which I have long had my eye, with very strong desire that the blessing of the Gospel might be given to it. It is the country of the Congo."

He offered £1,000 as a gift to the Society if they would undertake to visit this part, running a steamboat in the upper reaches of the Congo to facilitate communication, and teach the people. There had been a Roman Catholic mission there some three hundred years before, of which only a deserted cathedral was left to testify. Now that Stanley had made the name of the Congo more

familiar to the public, it was hoped something might be done.

In fact, Stanley's latest despatch, dated from Embomwe on the Congo, 10th August, 1877, appeared just as the Committee, having accepted the gift, with its conditions, was making the matter widely known to enlist interest. Stanley stated that his last journey had brought an important addition to geographical knowledge by proving that the Lualaba and Congo Rivers were identical, a point which had always been surmised but had been so far without proof.

So the missionaries followed the explorer. Two young men called Comber and Grenfell, then stationed at the Cameroons, were asked to undertake the work of expansion up the Congo River. Scarcely two years later, Comber returned home with a story of difficulties overcome, friendship established with the King of the Congo, and the need of volunteers. He gathered together an eager band of recruits. Of these Bentley, Crudgington and Hartland went out at once, and travelled up from Banana on the coast to the new settlement called San Salvador in the interior. Their letters appeared in the *Baptist Missionary Herald* from time to time, and in spite of the close print of the old series and the few badly reproduced illustrations, were eagerly devoured by earnest and enthusiastic sympathisers at home.

In 1881 some of them started out to reach the newly discovered Stanley Pool in the very centre of Africa. Native traders blocked the way, and thirteen unsuccessful attempts had already been made. Comber was badly wounded, but the fourteenth time brought success. Stanley had made a road for part of the way,

which they had been able to follow, and what a road it was!

"On our right," says Mr. Bentley in one of his letters, "roared the Falls, tumbling and foaming madly over huge rocks in the bed of the river. On our left rose a very high mountain of rocks almost perpendicularly from the water, and we were amazed at the wonderful piece of engineering which Mr. Stanley has accomplished. To get round the mountain he had to blast and throw over huge masses of rock, and to build up a strong road which the river should not wash away when it rose to its highest."

But this part of their course was comparatively easy, much harder work followed after, as they soon found.

The names of Comber, Bentley and Grenfell are known to all lovers of Africa. Comber died early, but not until he had put in eleven years of work in Africa. Bentley was a scholar and scientist who was afterwards D.D. and F.R.G.S. He reduced the Congo language to writing and compiled a grammar for the natives. And he was thus able to translate the Gospel for them.

George Grenfell came home to superintend the building of a steamer to be called the *Peace*, which, according to Mr. Arthington's idealistic vision, was to be so constructed as to be taken out in parts, and put together again on the Congo. The steamer had to be built in sections, no one of which could exceed 64 lbs., this being the weight of a full load for a carrier. All this was accomplished, the steamer was successfully built in the yard of Messrs. Thorneycroft, of Chiswick, and taken out and put together again up-country, and launched on the Congo on the 6th of July, 1884. She was seventy feet long and ten feet six inches broad.

She had a screw propeller and seven watertight compartments, and her best speed was twelve miles an hour. Then early in 1885 appeared the advertisement with the heading already given :—

"THE CONGO MISSION

"Wanted a Missionary with Engineering Experience

"In the December *Herald* we reported the sad tidings of the decease of the engineer sent out by the Society in July last from the shipbuilding yard of Messrs. Thorneycroft, of Chiswick, to assist in the reconstruction and management of the steamer *Peace*.

"Since the receipt of this sad news the Committee have been deliberating as to the best plan for the future, and they have now finally resolved that it will not be wise to try and secure a merely skilled mechanic, but to use their best endeavours to obtain the services of a thoroughly equipped Missionary possessing technical skill and practical acquaintance with engineering. The Committee feel, in the words of the Rev. George Grenfell :—

"'That it is now clear that some specially fitted and technically qualified missionary should be sought after, possessing the needful skill to direct and superintend the native engineers of the coast, rather than a merely engineering mechanic who may not be in any true sense a missionary.'

"The Committee, therefore, desire to announce, through the pages of the *Herald*, that they will be thankful to receive offers of service from suitable candidates possessing engineering qualifications and experience ; and they cherish the confident hope that there may be, in the North of England, and in Scotland

especially, many who, having all the needed qualifications, may be found willing to devote themselves to this most promising and inspiring work.

"The Secretary, Mr. A. H. Baynes, will be thankful to place himself in personal communication with any who may feel drawn to offer themselves for this enterprise."

CHAPTER III

FIRST MONTHS IN WEST AFRICA

With David Charters' parentage, training and ardent mind there could be only one response to such an advertisement. He, in common with dozens of other young mechanics, had read the letters of the West African missionaries and been fired by them. Now when they were calling, not for an ordained helper, but for an engineer, it opened the way to the life of travel he longed for.

The Headquarters of the Baptist Missionary Society were in London, at 19, Furnival Street, and it shows that young Charters had the right stuff in him because he was summoned straight to London to be examined in person. He was then not much over twenty-one, and as it was his first visit to London, indeed the first long journey of any kind, the affair was as important as it was exciting. He found his way to number 19, which is a tall, narrow, rather dark, building erected in 1870 for the Society. The Sub-Committee had been given full powers to select an engineer from among the applicants who answered their advertisement, and with them that day they had, by special request, Tom Comber, who was in England, and knowing the kind of work which would be required from the man they were to appoint, was sitting with them. Charters, writing probably of this meeting subsequently, said

that he was surprised when he first saw the hero, Comber. He had pictured a big strapping man and saw instead " a beautiful little man, with a sweetness of countenance which I envied. His soul seemed to shine out of his face and I have heard since from more than one the somewhat strong expression, ' Your Comber had the face of an angel.' "

It was of him Stanley said, " If money could have bought your Comber, I would have had him."

Only one other candidate had been summoned to be interviewed, and he went away disappointed, for David was chosen. He had to start almost immediately, for it was the end of March when he saw the Committee, and he had to sail in the s.s. *Laudana* from Liverpool on April 1st. He wrote to his parents telling them of his prospects, and then collected his outfit before going north again. He says in a letter to his mother :—

" The work which I have set my mind on for so long will soon be the task allotted to me. We are on our way Home, let us make the best of the way. I expect many difficulties and dangers. However, I shall use all the means God has given me to overcome them, and if I don't succeed then, I am not to blame. I have a Friend Who sticks closer than a brother. In His strength I can face anything. You have both always set me a noble example. I speak from experience. My mind is in perfect peace."

Before he left Scotland David gave his brother James a little morocco-bound copy of " The Imitation of Christ." This shows that he was already a missionary in spirit, as it is hardly the sort of gift one would expect from one young engineer to another.

He describes his first impressions of Africa in a letter to a friend (P. H. Sturrock).

(*Tunduwa or Underhill.* 18*th May*, 1885.)

" I arrived at this place all well and hearty on Friday afternoon at 4 o'clock. This is the first mission station we have in Africa, so you may depend we received a warm and kind reception. One of the first missionaries at this place, who came from Glasgow only four months ago and whom I knew well, died here in the second week of March. He was a good earnest Christian lad and was a member of the same church as myself. Truly God moves in a mysterious way! Here was a very promising young missionary cut off before he could be of service in preaching to the natives, and three weeks after him (the end of March), we lost another at Stanley Pool, also a Scotsman, although I did not know him personally.

" We left Liverpool on 1st April in s.s. *Laudana* (a very dirty, bad-smelling though a good sea boat). Our first Sabbath was the worst day of all and on the Sabbath evening we had the pleasure of four inches of water in our sleeping cabin. We called at Sierra Leone, where I went on shore. I saw some children (very, very small) walking about, and only for the fact that they were minus a tail I should have favoured Darwin's theory.

" After Sierra Leone we called at many places on the Kroo coast. The ship lies about a mile off the shore and announces her arrival by firing a gun. Immediately you see the natives coming through the bush and making for the ship in their canoes. We here saw several almost nude Africans wearing Chimney

Hats, a most laughable sight. Some of them had the hats still wrapped in paper. Our next landing place was Bonny (a low marshy place) where there is a Ju-Ju house containing thousands of skulls. After Bonny we called at Fernando Po which is said to be very unhealthy. Then we went to Old Calabar, where we remained two days and were very kindly received by a Scotch U.P. Mission. We were here introduced to King Ergo Honesty VII., who is a Christian man and looked very honest indeed. He wore a black coat with brass buttons and a pair of white trousers. His canoe was very nicely painted and contained about thirty attendants. One attendant always holds up an umbrella over the King's head, while another beats a tom-tom. The mission here is U.P. so of course they are all Scotch. The lizards run about here in hundreds, there are also parrots and beautiful butterflies to be seen flying about. We went to the school and heard the native children read English very well. We also went to the weekly evening prayer-meeting (about 50 to 60 in number) and my he'rt gaed back to auld Scotland as we sang together (in the native language, 'Efik') the 40th Psalm to the auld auld tune 'Ballerma.' God bless and prosper the work in Old Calabar is my prayer. After bidding good-bye to the kind folks there we set off once more, and this time our first call was at St. Thomas, where we remained nine or ten hours. This place belongs to the Portuguese, and I was informed there are a great many slaves in the coffee plantations. What would I not give to be able to set them free! The Africans only need a Wallace or a Bruce to lead them and inspire them with courage.

"When starting from Banana the ground is very low, but up near Boma the hills are high and remind me of the north of Scotland. Where I am living, the station is very high and takes all your puff to get up. I saw one alligator and a forest of monkeys on the way up-river, and I had some shots from my revolver at several birds, but my revolver kicks too much to be effective. Parrots are very plentiful all down the coast and may be had for four shillings, also monkeys and chimpanzees.

"I have seen several cases of fever and some mysterious diseases. There is one insect or worm called a Jigger, which gets into the toes especially, and if not extracted after they become visible, it eats the toes right off. Many of the Africans have lost toes by this worm. If you ask what is wrong they say 'Mesa he eat him.' I saw an instance of treading on an African's toes at Sierra Leone. They are extremely sensitive about the feet. This unfortunate catastrophe was announced by a yell like thunder, and in one moment two Africans were shouting and blessing each other to the best of their ability."

(*Vunda or Baynestown. 16th August*, 1885.)

"I arrived at Baynestown on 14th after four days' march, average 16½ miles per day. This is a beautiful place and is considered to be one of our healthiest stations. It is built on an isthmus and is too far away from the towns for much missionary work to be done. We have fine views in all directions. I hope to sketch them some day. The boys are all away or going away except two so I can't do much teaching. I shall devote my time to clearing out the station and learning the

language. After all the goods are cleared out, I shall go to Stanley Pool and leave the station in charge of an African (Trusty). I have had very good health (considering I am a new man) out here, and don't complain as yet of not getting to the steamer, the *Peace*. Perhaps God has some purpose in it, perhaps it is for my good.

" I don't want however to be travelling all over the country any more, next time I move I shall take good care it is to the Pool. Travelling, I find, in Africa has a hardening and demoralising effect. I mean you can't think to read your Bible or engage in religious exercises. When you arrive at your sleeping place you are tired, you have to ask for a house, get some chop made, look after boxes, etc., and often you have plenty of noise from the carriers, and sometimes the midnight slumber is disturbed by the ' Eukimba,' a set of native religious impostors. These people live in the bush and keep up a continual shouting all night and their r-r-r-r-r-r- makes me often wish I could get hold of one of them. Wouldn't I make him dance !

" The people here are awfully stupid. For instance if a native is sick and takes medicine, he must give some to a dog also, the idea is that the sickness will pass into the dog. They take old rags and make ' Nkesi ' or ' Fetish.' These Fetishes they believe can do all sorts of things. If a man shoots at another man and the man shot at has a fetish, the bullet can't strike him. They kill fowls and pigs and sprinkle the blood on the fetish to make the fetish strong and many many other stupid things. I could tell you enough to fill a volume. In passing through some of the towns I was rather amused to hear the babies crying in the same tone as our British babies, only instead of ' Mama ' they cry ' a-ya-ya, a-ya-ya.'

When the little children see a white man they run as hard as they can, some crying for fear, and then as you enter the town you hear the people saying '*Mundela Kwizanga*' (white man coming). It appears that the mothers frighten their children by saying 'I will give you to the white man.'"

(*8th September.*)

"I have now got this station nearly cleared out but have no views of getting to the Pool for I don't know how long. About an hour ago I caught a fine young eagle scarcely as large as the one in the West End Park. If it lives I am going to dash (give) it to Mr. Moslener who leaves for England soon. We also killed an alligator about seven days ago, but he jumped into the water and we lost him. At night we sometimes hear the hippopotami boo-booing, but they don't venture near. Monkeys I see very often, chopping the peas in the garden, but they are too small to shoot."

At last he had his desire, but it was not until the following January when he had been in the country already nine months that he got the order to go up the Congo.

(*21st January*, 1886.)

"All being well I start in the *Peace* for Stanley Falls on Monday first. With me go Mr. and Mrs. Grenfell and Baron von Nimptseh, who has been appointed by the Congo Free State to negotiate with Tippoo, the Arab slave trader. The State is anxious to stop his depredations and so is the Mission. We expect to be away for two or three months. I shall keep my eyes open and see if I can't pick up a few curios. Meanwhile I ask God to take care of us on the journey.

" As I write, Baron Nimptseh, with a large number of Zanzibaris, is busy fighting in and burning a town not far away. The natives of this town had been rather troublesome to the State, and yesterday cut a Zanzibari's head open as he was passing, and hence their town is to be destroyed.

" Our nearest neighbour is Nga Liema, the same old fellow who gave Stanley so much trouble. He is more friendly to us however than he is to the State, as indeed all the natives are. Still he is not the most amiable of neighbours, and we received a hint from Nimptseh yesterday that Nga Liema might attack the camp and our station during the absence of so many men. I did not think so as the natives are great cowards and have no idea of fighting in style, and last night's quietude shows that I was right.

" There have been various wars (as the natives call them) in which one man was killed and one wounded, and after considering this immense slaughter a peace was decided upon. In another district where wars were frequently taking place, and guns the implements of destruction, two or three were killed in every war, so the head chief decided that in the next wars no guns were to be used, as they killed too many people, and for the future he recommended bows and arrows, and would you believe it, the people gladly agreed. As I write several natives come to the door to make the usual salutation '*Mbote*' to which I answer '*Mbote quandee*' or '*Mbote ndu.*'

" Fevers are becoming entire strangers to me."

CHAPTER IV

STANLEY POOL

THERE are unfortunately no letters remaining which tell of the impressions of the young Scottish engineer on that first wonderful journey through the heart of Africa. The next record in his own handwriting tells that he had reached Stanley Pool, where a Mission headquarters on the upper waters of the Congo, to be named Arthington in honour of the donor who had made it possible, was to be established.

Below Stanley Pool the Congo is not navigable owing to the rapids ; that was why it had been necessary to carry the steamer *Peace* in sections up-country the whole way. There is now a railway through the Belgian Congo, running from Matadi on the coast to Stanley Pool, and even as this is being written the French Cabinet have decided to proceed at once with the construction of the railway in French Equatorial Africa, which will connect Brazzaville, near Stanley Pool, with the coast at Pointe Noire. Construction of this line, which will be about 300 miles long, was begun in 1921 at the inner end. Parts of it were laid out, and work was begun also at the other end in the following year, but a great deal remains to be done, and to expect the line to be in use in seven years' time is a hopeful estimate.

The French idea is that most of their Congo trade has been so far carried by the Belgian line, and they might

as well get the benefit of it themselves. Moreover the new line will tap districts to the north of the Congo, developing the copper-mining in Minduli, and the trade in wood from the forests of Mayombe. The two lines would form roughly an equilateral triangle, with the apex at Stanley Pool and the base on the coast.

There was of course nothing of this kind in 1886, when David Charters went up-country, and the wonder of all he saw as he journeyed through the mighty forests must have greatly impressed him.

The first we hear of him in his new duties is in March, 1886, when he was in charge of the *Peace* in the Upper Congo, and had the bad luck to run her on one of the reefs of submerged and still uncharted rocks, which formed a constant menace. Mr. Grenfell, who, with his wife and child, was on board, writes :—

" In three minutes the whole of the forepart of the steamer as far as the engine room was full of water, for all three of the watertight compartments were bilged by a series of holes not far from the keel. A storm was looming in the distance, and a sorry fate awaited the poor *Peace* if we failed to get her off her hard bed. Happily we had a couple of boats with us and so we determined to try to turn them to account by hauling. We found we were gradually able to raise the bows of the *Peace* off the rocks ; and after half an hour's hard pulling we were quite free and floating down river. A few minutes later we were safely ashore at a point some 300 yards below. We had not been ashore five minutes before the wind came sweeping down between the hills which bound the gorge through which the Congo runs for the last hundred miles before reaching the Pool ; and then the rain, such rain, and such torrents of it ! But we

did not mind the wind or rain ; we were off the rocks and safe ashore, and great was our gratitude.

" The next morning we carefully stopped the holes with cloth and cotton waste and then baled out the water. We then proceeded to get up steam and to run the steamer ashore. Our second attempt was so successful that the last hole, twenty-four feet from the stern, and only three inches from the keel, was high and dry, with an inch or two of working-space between it and the sand, which we soon increased by digging out. Three days later the eleven patches, some of them two feet long, were riveted up, and we were watertight once more."

Mr. Grenfell writes of the new engineer :—

" This has been a much heavier accident than we met in the Mobargi ; but through all the work it has involved, I have had Mr. Charters' help—in fact upon him the burden of the work has fallen ; but he thrives on it, for he is much better than when he left Arthington. I am indeed glad of such a colleague."

In June, 1886, Stanley Pool, or Arthington Station, was destroyed by fire, and along with it the goods stored for the outfit of a new station up-river, and all the steamer's fittings and gear. The missionaries, too, including Grenfell, Bentley and Charters, lost much of their private property, such as clothing and books. Most of the houses at the station were of wood, bamboo and grass, and naturally ignited very readily. This catastrophe made the missionaries eager to build houses of brick or stone or corrugated iron.

" At Arthington," wrote Tom Comber proudly, " brick-making has commenced. Here we have thousands of bricks already made and five thousand are

to-night burning on our kilns. I hope we shall soon have some brick houses built."

He went on with an eloquent appeal for funds to meet the great loss involved. He pointed out that :—

" During 1884 six young missionaries had been stricken down by death, whereas during 1885–6 they had only had to mourn the loss of one. Besides this, the *Peace* is just safe home in port after her long four months' cruise. Mr. and Mrs. Grenfell and Charters all well. Grenfell writes me : ' We passed no group of towns without entering into friendly relationship. All is well up river and very promising.' Truly, the *Peace* with our brethren, Grenfell and Charters, is doing splendid work."

In December of the same year Charters writes to P. H. Sturrock :—

(*Peace, River Kwango. 17th December.*)

" I have had a fair amount of exploring since I came out here, viz. : Stanley Falls, up the Kasai River about 500 miles, 20 miles up the Mobangi River, we circumnavigated the Lake Leopold and now we are on our present journey still exploring. Personally I like exploring very much, but I shall not be sorry when we have done for reasons I need not explain.

" We have shot now and then at alligators and hippopotami, only yesterday I killed one of the latter with a Snider bullet. The heart and tongue we always reserve for our own table though they are rather strong, the carcase goes to the crew. I enjoy wonderful health out here for which I am very thankful. I might say I am as well as ever I was at home.

" The people out here need the Gospel very much, and

medicine is a fine key for opening the door to get at them. I can assure you, P——, that the sights I have seen would make you almost weep. Oh, the immorality and degradation of the poor Africans! The women especially are little better than the brute beasts in most parts of the Congo. For earnest, Christ-like, large-hearted men there is a grand noble task to be performed. Self-denial, hardship, patience, love must be the main elements that characterise those men. Those who come out to Congo have a great responsibility on their shoulders; every moment is precious and their whole life ought to be spent for the good of Africa. Livingstone must have been a noble man, a giant in self-denial, to live as he did, towering high above the trivial incidents and deprivations he was subjected to, and I for one believe that the secret of his life was that he was a sincere Christian."

The most important expedition undertaken by Charters while out on the Congo was that for the Relief of Emin Pasha. Stanley practically commandeered the *Peace*, as steamers on the Congo were very few. It was lent to him on the understanding that nothing should be done on the trip contrary to the missionary character. Stanley gives an account of his difficulties in his book "In Darkest Africa." All the steamers were in need of repair and yet it was imperative to start at once. The repairs were therefore carried through so hastily that trouble was experienced right from the beginning. "The first to lead off was the *Henry Reed* belonging to the American Baptist Mission, with two barges; it was followed by the *Stanley* and the *Florida;* last came the *Peace.*" The *Stanley* soon came to grief, and the engineers of all the steamers

set to work to mend her. "But," says Stanley, "Messrs. Charters and Walker, both Scotsmen, were the most effective at repairs." Charters especially was up to his waist in water for hours, and his courage and endurance made a deep impression on Stanley.

Charters wrote an account of this expedition which appeared serially in the *Baptist Missionary Herald*, 1886–7, and is here republished.

What follows is therefore his own narrative, somewhat condensed.

"Towards the beginning of April, 1887, the intelligence reached Stanley Pool that a large expedition, numbering over seven hundred men, under the command of Mr. H. M. Stanley was advancing on that place. At the time when this news reached us the food supply of Stanley Pool and the surrounding district was at its lowest. The native loaf or dumpling of cassava which usually cost one brass rod had been gradually rising in price and could only be had with difficulty at a cost of nine brass rods. Even the Europeans were pinched to some extent for their usual supplies, and to this day I have memories, not of the sweetest, of palm oil and smoked fish, on many occasions the fish being quite rancid and certainly old enough to speak for itself. Very naturally, on hearing of the approach of such a large number of men our first thoughts were directed to solving the problem of how so many additional mouths were to be filled, and many anxious fears were expressed that the expedition, if delayed at Stanley Pool would, to use an African expression, 'eat up the country.'

"At length on a sweltering hot day towards the end

of April the advance guard of the expedition and the Egyptian flag was seen at Kintamo, Stanley Pool. In an incredibly short time the pioneers had cleared the grass, shrubs, and trees, from the site selected for the camp; the commander's tent which, by the way, is a magnificent structure consisting of several apartments, was soon in course of being erected, smaller tents for the officers were being unwrapped, men, boys, boxes, bales, all seemed mixed up in glorious confusion.

"The majority of the men are natives of Zanzibar. Some of these men (I knew them intimately because I had met them before) would actually take the teeth out of your head if such a thing was possible.

"Here we see the steel sectional boat to be used in the crossing of rivers or lakes. Each section is a comfortable load for two men and is fitted with a thick india-rubber joint so that when all the sections are screwed together the boat is perfectly watertight.

"Standing patiently on one side, waiting until they are relieved of their burdens, are the donkeys of the expedition. Towards the rear of the expedition are to be seen a body of about sixty men, whose dress is different and whose skins are much darker than those of their comrades from Zanzibar. These men are the regular soldiers of the expedition, and they are Soudanese, who have served with General Gordon in the Soudan.

"A little apart from the main camp and surrounded by a fence of brushwood and shrubs is a small enclosure. The renowned Arab chief Tippoo Tib, his nephew and a few of his principal men with thirty wives, are camped here.

"Some of the men have erected rude huts with

branches of trees, covered over with grass; others have got mackintosh sheets stretched on posts tent fashion. The scene is a very picturesque one, each group has its camp fire round which they are gathered; some are quietly dozing, others are sitting gazing into the fire, and musing silently on the past or perhaps on the dark, unknown future; some are busy preparing, others eating, their evening meal, a few are quietly smoking and indulging in social chat. Some are under cover, others, too tired to erect any covering, are stretched on mother earth with their feet towards the fire which is faintly flickering in the darkness. The pale moon peeping out at intervals from behind the passing clouds, the sleeping forms of the men, the dying camp fires, the dark figures of the Soudanese sentries, the strange silence broken only by the monotonous croaking of thousands of frogs, all lend a strange weirdness to the scene. Next morning at five a.m. the bugle will announce that the duties of the day are about to begin.

"On Sunday morning, 1st May, the main body of the expedition consisting of over six hundred men, and accompanied by Tippoo Tib and party, embarked on board the three steamers, which had been secured for transportation. In addition to the steamers, all the available boats besides the hulls of two steamers, were pressed into the service and used as barges, and even with these extras, every available inch was occupied. Amid three hearty cheers from the few Europeans assembled to see the expedition off, the large stern wheel of the *Stanley* began slowly to revolve, and in a few minutes she was off. Then followed the *Henry Reed*, a small stern wheeler belonging to the American

Mission, and lastly the *Peace*, the flag ship of the expedition. It is said that misfortunes seldom come single handed. I had spent a sleepless night with toothache.

" On starting, the glass water gauge on the boiler of our little vessel was mistaken for a hand-rail, and the result was a violent explosion and hissing caused by the escape of steam and water. Then just as we got nicely under weigh, and it seemed as though we were going to give a good account of ourselves, we were pulled up most unexpectedly. While passing through between two rocky islands where the water had a current of six knots an hour, which required our utmost speed to pass, the rudder of our vessel snapped across the neck. To steer in such a current was impossible without a rudder. The vessel seemed quite helpless and drifted with the current till it came to an enormous whirlpool, formed by the meeting of a down and up current ; right in the centre of the whirlpool was a clear circular space, about two feet in diameter, into which you could have thrown a biscuit without its getting wetted. Anchors were of no use we found to our cost. No sooner did our vessel reach the whirlpool than it was drawn in and began to turn round and round. After a few turns the up current caught us broadside and carried us up to number two whirlpool, where we went through the same graceful performance of turning round several times. It was a kind of waltz that fairly took away our breath, especially when the turning round was now and then varied by an ugly list to one side and the seething water lapped our deck. After nearly half an hour of this excitement, two of our crew bravely volunteered to hang on to the stern rails of our steamer and work the

tail end of the rudder with their feet, and by this means we were able to reach the shore.

" Monday morning, after repairing the rudder, saw us off again, our course lying between the islands in Stanley Pool. In many respects this Pool, which is about fifteen miles long and six or seven miles wide, resembles Loch Lomond, though its beauty is not quite of the same type, being more modified in its hills than Loch Lomond is. By four p.m. we were abreast of Dover cliffs, so called because of their resemblance to chalk cliffs, and at six p.m., we camped for the night just outside of Stanley Pool.

" Next morning by six a.m. the expedition was once more under weigh. For the first few days we steamed between high hills showing many varieties of shape and colour, indeed the Congo at this part may justly be compared to some parts of the Rhine, though the contour of the hills is bolder and their features more rugged than those of the Rhine.

" On the afternoon of the 5th we reached Mswata and found Major Barttelot and his men all well.

" After a few days rest at Mswata, we were once more under weigh, and in a few hours were abreast of the River Kasai recently explored by Lieutenant Weissman. Crossing well over to the opposite side of the Congo to avoid the rapid swirl of the waters of the Kasai as they enter the Congo we had a fine view of the Mission Station of the Algerian Priests. Two days later the *Stanley* struck on a reef of rocks just sufficiently covered with water to hide them, and in repairing the damage done, the whole expedition was delayed fully two days. On our arrival at Bolobo the natives turned out *en masse* to gaze on us, and when the old chief Ibaka learned that

his friend *Bula Matadi* (Mr. Stanley) had come, he was highly delighted.

" The Bateke, or traders, whose villages are found around Stanley Pool are a very sharp people indeed. At striking a bargain they have few equals. In appearance they are rather dark, the hair being usually done up in the form of a chignon. The tribal marks consisting of longitudinal cicatrices on the face.

" The Wabuma found in the neighbourhood of Mswata and for some distance up the Kasai are a quiet peaceable people. Their tribal mark is similar to the Bateke's, but the hair is done up exactly in the shape of a Scotch tam-o-shanter.

" The Bayansi or Babanzi found at Bolobo, and in the villages on the banks of the Congo for many miles, are rather a pleasant people. Most of their time is spent in canoes and hence the muscles of the arm and their chests are extremely well developed as a rule. Perhaps however the legs are rather neglected, and many of these people have what a Scotsman calls a ' shachly gait.' The hair is usually nicely parted in the middle and two plaits gradually tapering to a fine point hang down in front. The bodies are usually smeared from head to foot with a mixture of palm oil and camwood powder, thus giving them an appearance of having been varnished. The tribal marks consist of a few ornamental lobes before the ears, or on the forehead. Altogether this is a fine people and with civilisation and commerce they might develop into a very respectable community.

" On the morning of the 15th, leaving the detachment of one hundred men at Bolobo under Messrs. Ward and

Bonny, and taking Major Barttelot and Dr. Parks with us, we once more started for the Aruwimi.

" On our arrival at Lukolela the chiefs of the district gave us a warm welcome, gifts were freely interchanged, the women rushed off to their villages and returned with baskets full of the *Misombo* (native bread). Two days were spent in this hospitable place, and when we left each man had sufficient food to last for several days.

" A little beyond Lukolela, the senior chief of the district who entertained a special regard for me and evinced that regard by offering, or rather expressing a desire, to make me his son-in-law, came to meet us in a splendid canoe and presented us with two goats and some plantains. We of course took good care to return his present two-fold.

" We were now in the vicinity of the Equator, and as we steamed past the villages, the friendly Batolo came out to meet us in swarms, and in their canoes, dogs, goats, hens, plantains, bananas, eggs, snails, fish, crocodiles, hippopotamus flesh, and many other edible commodities, were to be seen for sale. It was positively astonishing to see how quickly the Zanzibaris emptied a canoe of its contents, and then the quarrelling, the squabbling and hubbub of men, women, and children, all seeking to recover lost property, was something terrific. Mr. Stanley at length interfered and threatened such as were caught stealing with severe punishment.

" After obtaining a supply of food for the men and firewood for the boilers of the steamers, we took farewell of our Equatorial friends and three days later, reached Bangala Station, the furthest inland station of the Congo Free State Government. As we neared this

station the natives who delight in fighting (and who fought with Stanley in 1877) rushed up to their waists in the river and called on *Bula Matadi* to take them with him to the fight, a salute of three guns was also fired in honour of the Founder of the Free State (Stanley).

" While we were waiting at this place the men of the expedition indulged freely in the delicious sugar-cane wine made by the natives ; some of our sick men died and their comrades, either too lazy, or too indifferent, to bury them, threw the dead bodies into the river, there to float, a disgusting spectacle, or to become food for crocodiles.

" One could not help noticing also the men of Bangala as they moved about with their spears and ferocious-looking knives in their hands, ready and fit for any mischief. The Bangala women's dress consists of a series of fringes of grass worn one over the other and suspended round the waist, the whole when completed resembling in shape the Scotch kilt. Again and again, and not without some anxiety, did I watch the Bangala mother washing baby ; she simply holds baby by one arm and ducks the poor little creature under the water, keeping it there for a few seconds and causing the European onlooker to wonder whether she really means to do away with the infant, and then after repeating the operation six or seven times, baby is supposed to be washed. From Bangala the *Henry Reed* with Tippoo Tib and party, besides the thirty wives, who had caused some little feeling between the Officers of the expedition and the Arabs, in addition to a force of Soudanese, under the command of Major Barttelot, was directed to push on with all speed to Stanley Falls. At Stanley

Falls the Arab chief was to recruit six hundred porters and there march them overland to the Camp on the Aruwimi. Twelve hours after the *Henry Reed* had left for Stanley Falls, the remainder of the expedition embarked on board the *Stanley* and the *Peace* and started for the Aruwimi. After crossing from Bangala Station to the left bank of the river, we found ourselves in a low marshy country, great tracts of which are covered at high water. Orchilla Weed, which I believe is used as a dye, is very plentiful in this quarter. Gum copal of several shades can be picked up in large nuggets in the forests. Hundreds of beautiful orchids, some of them rare specimens and of considerable value, are to be seen and had for the taking.

"Dead trees were also very numerous so we had comparatively little difficulty in obtaining the necessary supply of fire wood for the steamer's boilers.

"This being the case may have put the men into extra good spirits. On stopping for the night, the men as usual began to look for firewood. The sound of the cutting saws, the clanking of the axes at work, the bright camp fires, the white gowns and black faces with a beautiful forest background lent a strange enchantment to the scene. By-and-by a song was raised, a true African song, all chorus and after the style of a chant, and soon out of the depth of the forest the sound of over one hundred voices joining in the chorus was very inspiring. At ten p.m. the song was loud, at eleven p.m. it was louder, at midnight it was terrific; then the figure of a little thick-set man about five feet six inches in height, dressed in a sleeping gown, was seen issuing from the cabin of the *Peace*. The little man had a long stick in his hand, he lifted up his voice, whether in

blessing or otherwise I leave you to judge. There was a sudden pattering of bare feet on the grassy sod, the chorus ceased, and in an instant all was as silent as the grave. That short thick-set figure in the white sleeping gown was of course the great African explorer.

" We were now on the borders of the cannibal country and soon the proofs of cannibalism began to appear. Human skulls and bones were very plentiful; on one little bush about six feet high I counted no less than fourteen skulls. Men with a mere apology for dress, and women absolutely naked were to be seen wearing necklaces containing between two hundred and three hundred teeth. ' We don't eat friends, only enemies,' was the reply we received on speaking to them.

" On arriving at the large village of Bopoto we found the villagers drawn up in battle array. The Maxim gun on the *Stanley* was fixed in position, ready to pour its death-dealing showers on the mass of savages, who knew nothing of its power. After considerable delay in parleying, the expedition was allowed to land, on condition that the men be kept in check. After laying in a supply of provisions, we were once more under steam, and winding in and out between islands, were soon in the widest part of the Congo (sixteen miles); however an hour or two more steaming soon brought us into view of both banks.

" On the Sunday morning after we had left Bopoto, we were surprised to come upon the large village of Bugungu in ruins. There were evidences of a fight, a surprise, a hasty flight, and the smouldering huts, the charred plantain stems, the large village drums still blazing, told that the destroyer had done his work most effectually. Seeing some natives skulking behind trees,

we asked who had done the mischief, but received no answer. Instinctively we attributed the deed to the Arabs, and the presence of a large Arab canoe lent colour to our suspicions. Whoever the destroyers might be, we hoped that we might fall in with them soon.

" On our arrival at the mouth of the Aruwimi, which is a river comparable to the Thames, we painted in large figures on a tree the day of month, 12th, thus indicating to Major Barttelot, who had instructions to look out for this sign, that we had reached and gone up the Aruwimi on the 12th June. Just inside the mouth of the Aruwimi we saw the large village of Basoko. Unfortunate Basoko had been burned several times, by Stanley in 1877, when its villagers attacked him as he passed down the Congo ; by Arabs more than once. These calamities had somewhat tamed the fierce warlike spirit of its cannibal inhabitants and, as we approached, they took to their canoes and paddled away in flight. After some shouting and manœuvring the natives opened communication with us. Two of the bravest men approached our steamer in a canoe and insisted on making blood brotherhood with us before we had any further dealings. Blood brotherhood was accordingly performed ; faith was somewhat established and provisions in limited quantity were forthcoming, when an interesting little episode occurred.

" Mr. Stanley's interpreter named Baruti had been stolen some years previously from this same village by the Arabs. He had been to England and now spoke English fluently. Imagine then his surprise when he recognised in one of these cannibals his long-lost elder brother.

" After leaving Basoko we steamed steadily up the

Aruwimi. Food was nowhere to be had, not even at the highest price. On the evening of the second day we camped at a village. The half-famished soldiers, in the absence of the natives, who had fled, laid hands on all goods valuable and otherwise that could be found, eatables however being most prized. Next morning at five a.m., just as we were about to start, one of the Zanzibaris in wanton mischief, set fire to a hut; the conflagration spread, but fortunately the few huts burned were isolated from the main street of the village. An inquiry was instituted, the guilty man was found out and a severe punishment awarded, but more of this hereafter.

"After leaving this village we began to notice a difference in the shape of the huts. Instead of the common rectangular, sloping-roofed hut so common in Africa, the huts before us were shaped exactly like a candle-extinguisher, measuring about sixteen or eighteen feet in height and six or seven feet in diameter at the base. The building material was the leaves of the plantain. The doors were just big enough to allow of a man creeping in head and shoulders first, and inside there was just ample accommodation for two to lie down or sit up, but not to stand.

"Three days and a half after leaving the mouth of the Aruwimi we arrived at the rapids, at the foot of the village of Yambuya. This was the limit of navigation, but the rapids seemed as though they would be passable at certain seasons. After telling the Yambuya villagers that we were friends and that we wanted a place near their village for a camp, we retired to the opposite side of the river and camped for the night.

"Next morning at seven a.m., we recrossed the river

and after our three hours parleying and making a small present to the inhabitants, and seeing that they were determined not to allow the expedition to land, the order was given to land, and if resistance was offered, then the landing was to be effected by force.

" Fortunately, however, for all concerned and especially for the poor savages, the steamer's whistle had the desired effect, and in a few seconds the place was cleared, each and all being anxious to escape from the monsters that bellowed with such frightful and discordant sounds.

" On reaching the top of the cliff, one or two old villagers, who were unable to get out of the way quick enough, were captured and after a few kind words and a small present, were dismissed.

" Having secured the village, and the natives not showing any desire to become friendly, the next step was to secure the farms of the people for the supply of the expedition. A palisade was erected and the surrounding forest was cleared for over a hundred yards so that the rifles might have full range in case of an attack, and that the attacking force might have no cover under which to raid the camp. Having made every arrangement to render the camp secure against attack, Mr. Stanley next directed his thoughts towards Wadelia, now only six degrees distant from the Camp. On the evening of the eighth day after our arrival at Yambuya the *Henry Reed*, regarding whose fate we had been a little anxious, appeared and Major Barttelot reported that Tippoo Tib was well received by his own people and that the promised porters would appear in a few days.

" On the morning of our ninth day at the Camp, Mr.

Stanley having arranged that Major Barttelot and Mr. Jameson should remain in charge of the camp, while the *Stanley* returned to Bolobo, to fetch the remaining detachment of one hundred men, besides the loads that had been left at Stanley Pool, determined to push on with all haste to Emin Pasha at Wadelai, taking with him Lieutenant Stairs, Captain Nelson, Dr. Parks, Mr. Jefferson and a young German attendant, and a force of over five hundred men. During the nine days that we remained at the camp, our sole food consisted of cassava and we had not even a pinch of salt with which to season it.

" Having said good-bye to the gallant explorer and his comrades, the two steamers *Henry Reed* and later on the *Peace* turned their bows down-river and started for Stanley Pool. While passing the village which had been partially burned, a number of splendidly-manned canoes were see to push out from the shore and make for the steamers. Each canoe contained from forty to fifty men, and the well-timed stroke told too plainly that they were war canoes and that their object was revenge. Both banks of the Aruwimi were lined with hundreds of savages hooting, drumming, and yelling like fiends. The number of pursuing canoes was gradually increasing, and the paddlers felt encouraged by the demonstrations of their friends on shore and paddled with redoubled energy. Here and there could be seen the splash of a poisoned arrow that was meant for, but had fallen short of us. At last the *Henry Reed* was reached ; the savages threw stones, some of which landed on her deck, this was replied to by a volley from the few able-bodied men who manned her, and one or two more of the cannibals were seen to drop overboard

from the canoes. A few more volleys were fired from the *Henry Reed*, and then it began to dawn upon the minds of the savages that some strange death-dealing power was in their midst. Quick as thought every canoe was emptied, and only the heads of the savages were visible above the water as they clung with one hand to their canoes. Darkness was now settling upon us, but on we steamed, fearing that we might strike a sunken tree or worse still be stuck on a sand bank, and as we gazed into the darkness and listened to the horrid din of the tom-toms and the hideous yells of the savages, whose dark forms could be seen at intervals through the glare of their camp fires, it seemed as though we were escaping from and being pursued by the legions of Hell. It was with thankful hearts that we cast anchor in the Congo at eight-thirty p.m., having travelled one hundred and twenty miles in the twelve hours. A few days later saw us in the land of plenty, and towards the middle of July, after an absence of two and a half months we were back again in Stanley Pool, not much the worse and certainly a little wiser for our new experiences."

CHAPTER V

THE MEDICAL DEGREE

HAVING discovered what urgent need there was for medical help in the regions of Dark Africa, David Charters formed the idea of giving up his post as engineer on the Congo, and returning home to get a medical degree. This involved, of course, giving up what he was earning, and he had no private resources, but like many another Scot who has become famous in afterlife, he determined to get through somehow in order to reach the knowledge and position he had set his heart on.

It was in 1888 he went home, by which time his health had suffered from the climate, and he thought that when he went out again, as he fully intended to do, he would try the East side of Africa. The Baptist Missionary Society advised him to take only a short course, but Charters determined to do the thing thoroughly, and became a qualified medical man. His own family did what little they could to help him, and Mr. Arthington, approving of his plan, helped too. So did Dr. Joseph Coats, his former Sunday-school Superintendent, and an Edinburgh lady advanced money, which was all paid back before his early death. Then, too, he became assistant to Dr. Flett at the Baptist Church in Paisley, and so he was just able to keep his head above water and pay the necessary fees. As has

been explained, it was mostly to members of the Flett family that the letters included in this book were written, and certainly these few years when he lived on intimate terms at the Baptist Manse in Paisley greatly influenced Charters.

Dr. Oliver Flett was a native of Orkney, a man of rugged and outspoken aspect, and of sterling earnestness of character. He was one of the founders of the Baptist Theological College in connection with the Baptist Union of Scotland. It is a curious fact that though such a gulf of years separated him from his assistant, they both met their ends unexpectedly within a month of each other, for Dr. Flett died with tragic suddenness as he was landing from a boating expedition in August, 1894, and David Charters was "missing" in September the same year.

Mrs. Flett and Mrs. Fraser were daughters of William Coats, of Paisley, and to them David wrote freely when he went out again to Africa. Dr. Fraser says of him :—

"Charters was a bright, happy, frank fellow, who could do most things he turned his hand to well. He had little or no training as a preacher, yet I have heard him preach sermons above the average. He was really fitted to do the civilising, educating, Christianising of savage races. Withal there was no religiosity ; I have heard him sing rollicking student songs with the abandon of a happy care-free boy."

And this is a schoolboy's impression of him at that time (Rev. W. H. Coats) :—

"I have a vivid recollection of meeting Dr. Charters when, as a boy of 11, convalescent after an illness, I was paying a visit to my uncle and aunt, Dr. and Mrs. Flett, in Paisley, at whose house he was a frequent

visitor. What struck my boyish mind first was his extreme unlikeness to my preconceived notion of a missionary. As I remember him he was a slim, dark, vigorous, athletic young fellow. His features I cannot clearly recall, except that he had piercing yet kindly eyes, a close-cropped moustache over a firm mouth, and a look at once keen and gentle. The kind of man to do things, I thought ; and my aunt's stories of his adventures, and especially of his repairing H. M. Stanley's little steamer, standing all night up to his waist in water, completed the impression of a hero of adventure. He took me for a walk and was full of vivacious talk the subject of which I have long ago forgotten, all except one point. He did not talk 'pi,' as schoolboys say ; but I remember his stopping and pointing to the Kilsyth Hills opposite, dotted with grazing cattle and remarking : 'Do you know what these cows say to me ?' 'No.' 'They say : "The cattle on a thousand hills are God's."' Boy-like, I grew uneasy at anything savouring of religion, but succeeded in returning : 'And what do the cows in Africa say ?' His reply was : 'They say the same.' But the impression made on my mind then that religion is something natural and real, capable of being combined with an adventurous heart and frolicsome spirit, is vivid to-day after all these years."

Charters got through his medical course in four years, as, though he failed in one examination, he took parts Two and Three together the following year. He graduated as M.B., C.M., in 1892.

Dr. Lindsay, of Glasgow, who was about the same age as himself, remembers him as not taking much part in the social life of the University. "He was quiet and unobtrusive, and his quietness was not shyness, rather

it seemed to me the outcome of a matured and self-reliant character and of a grave and reflective habit of mind. That impression of him, I think, was stamped upon my mind because of the contrast which he presented to the unbalanced ardour of the youthful missionary spirit of which we had examples among our contemporaries."

Dr. Howie, of Glasgow, another fellow-student, recalls him as " a quiet, retiring, little man, and I have no recollection of his gaining any distinctions, though he was a good ordinary student.

" What largely attracted me to him were his sound common-sense views on life, the absence of all ostentation, his impatience of all cant. He had no use for the ranting hymn-singer, who could not take off his coat and tackle the spade work so essential in pioneer labour on the mission field."

All was not jam in those years, as we see from Charters' letters to his old friend Sturrock, who had gone out to the Argentine.

" I am now grinding hard for my first professional, and hope to pass the exam. successfully, but there is no play for me in the next five weeks. Things move in this country pretty much as usual and you know that a student's life is not a very exciting one at best, for it's think, think, think, and grind, grind, grind. I have got on very well this session, though I have had a lot of Sunday work and I feel as I go along that the more I know the more I know that I don't know, and out of this feeling springs a strange dissatisfaction with self which must be curbed and checked, or there's no knowing to what extremes it might lead.

" Stanley is still in Cairo, busy writing his book for

which he is receiving £40,000. I had a note from him about three weeks ago, and he says that I am one of ' those good Scotsmen qualified to be entrusted with duties.' Taking him at his word, we will see how things develop in two years from now, when capping day comes, and M.B., C.M., follows on the D.C."

Stanley himself was in Glasgow in June, 1890, and he had not forgotten Charters. He saw him and made a proposal that he should take out and launch the first steamer on Lake Victoria Nyanza. The proposal was attractive, but David had not yet completed his professional course. However he said " Yes," having an idea of getting through the examination which loomed ahead first, and then going out for a year or two to this congenial job, after which he could return home to complete the curriculum. He was sufficiently decided to write to his friend Sturrock and tell him this. But December found him still in Glasgow, when he wrote again saying :—

(*27th December.*)

" If I remember right I said in my last letter that I expected soon to leave for Victoria Nyanza, Central Africa. You will see from this that I haven't as yet moved from my old quarters. African affairs like the Africans themselves, move slowly, ' softly softly catchee monkey,' as the ebonised servants used to say, but after delays and uncertainties, I am now definitely booked for Lake Victoria Nyanza which you know is near Emin Pasha's province. It is just possible I may sail on the 19th of January, certainly by the end of the month.

" From what I can gather some 2,000 men will march to this lake shortly after our arrival at Mombasa on the

east coast, and your humble servant has been asked to supervise the arranging of over 2,000 loads (parts of a steamer) to be carried some 400–500 miles and then fitted together. The engagement is for three years, with first-class passage out and home, salary to begin from date of departure from London. Of course I dictated my own terms and the arrangement is equal to over £300 a year.

" I feel somewhat sorry, as you will understand, to break my medical course for three years, but my advisers think my opportunity has come, the tide which you and I so often speak about. Sir William Mackinnon is personally interested in my going, besides other directors of the Imperial East Africa Chartered Company, then again H. M. Stanley, with whom I had a long interview in October, clearly understands my intentions, and led me to understand that if I do my work well, it will be a stepping stone to something better in the future.

" M. is away again at sea. He, like myself, was spun in his examination, leaving him still the task of passing for chief, and me with the terrible ordeal of twenty-one months' medical study, and three examinations before capping and M.B., C.M."

But all this fell through ; the plan for the steamer on Lake Victoria Nyanza did not then materialise, and David Charters went straight on with his medical course, after what must have been to a young man a very disturbing episode.

However, when he had finished in 1892, he found that Sir William Mackinnon, to whom he had been originally recommended by Stanley, and the other directors of the Company, had not forgotten him, and young as he

was, he was asked to be the first Superintendent of the newly formed Kibwezi Industrial Mission.

This Mission had been founded a year earlier by the British East Africa Chartered Company, with the Rev. Thomas Watson as its head. The Mission had been sent out under Dr. Stewart, of Lovedale, Missionary of the Free Church (now the United Free Church of Scotland). He, with six other Europeans, and 273 native porters, left Mombasa, September, 1891. They meant to get through to Kikuyu, afterwards to become the most famous Mission headquarters in Africa, but were frustrated by the native tribes, and halted at Kibwezi, about 200 miles inland. They acquired a large piece of land, and began operations among the Wakamba. The 500 acres acquired were bought from the native chief for calico and brass wire, and the Mission was established, at first on an independent and undenominational basis. It was later offered to the Free Church, which could not accept it on the conditions, and later (1900) it was taken over by the Established Church of Scotland.

Very little was then known of African climatic conditions, in fact the whole region had only just been explored. The fine views, grand growth and good springs seemed to the founders an ideal field of action for mission work, but as they planted their colony in the midst of forest land, it proved unhealthy at certain seasons of the year. Seven years later a mysterious subsidence in the soil was added to this disadvantage, and the mission station was moved to Kikuyu, which, though only a few degrees south of the Equator, stands at an altitude of from 4,000 to 8,000 feet above mean sea level. It is healthy for Europeans, though it has been proved it is too great a strain on those inclined to

nerviness. What the mission has grown to be, as one of the two great East Africa Missions, those of Kenya and Nyasaland, must be briefly sketched at the end of this book.

David Charters' short career as Superintendent was all concerned with Kibwezi, and he would have been amazed if he could have seen the gigantic proportions to which the tree has grown from the small seed planted so comparatively short a time ago. He accepted his new position with enthusiasm, and in December ran up to London to make final arrangements. There he saw the two directors, Sir William Mackinnon and A. L. Bruce, who were both shortly to " pass over," without living to see the full success of the work, due entirely to their efforts in the beginning. He also saw the Stanleys, and was introduced to the Marquess of Lorne. David wrote from London to Dr. Flett :—

" As far as can be, all is now settled. I am to take Dr. Moffat's place in every respect. The Mission is not connected with any church or denomination in particular ; the territory, of a hundred square miles, is meant to be an endowment for the future. It is likely that I shall be asked to leave for Africa on January 13th.

" When I think of you and what you have done for me, of how you have helped me in a thousand little ways, and of the kindly way in which you did it all, I cannot find words to thank you. If I turn out to be a *man*, and you know I hope I will, you will deserve much of the credit."

On the 13th of January in the s.s. *Java*, off Gravesend, he sends a few lines just as he is starting. He has received a copy of the report, he says, on the road then being made between Mombasa and Kibwezi. " Sir

William (Mackinnon) requests me to note the state of the road, the grades about the nullahs, if timber suitable for bridge building is available, if a traction engine could be utilised in dragging say 20–30 tons over the road. If this could be done, the steamer for the lake could be sent up.

" We are taking every kind of seed with us ; tea and coffee we are to receive at Aden from a Calcutta agent ; mangoes and other indigenous fruits can be had at Zanzibar or Mombasa."

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CHAPTER VI

ON THE ROAD TO KIBWEZI

On the voyage out Charters visited his fellow-student, Dr. John C. Young, who is still head of the famous "Keith Falconer" Mission of the United Free Church of Scotland. This led to some comments on the difference between the Arabs among whom Dr. Young worked, and the Africans, who had for centuries been oppressed and enslaved by them.

"We drove to Sheikh Othman ten miles from Aden. All the way over sand, sand, sand, passing hundreds of camels loaded with boxes and bales. The mirage was very noticeable. Houses, and men, and camels seemed as though standing out of the sea, yet as we drew nearer we found no sea, but the endless expanse of sand with a false sea beyond. Scarcely a blade of grass is to be seen in this neighbourhood. The people are mostly Mohammedans, and think no small beer of themselves. To them a Christian is a deceiver and an unbeliever. Better and nobler things seem to be almost unknown, and the almighty rupee in the form of baksheesh rules the day.

"I am glad my lot is to be among the Africans who are gentry compared with these Arabians. The only way in which the Arabs can be touched, in my poor opinion, is by the Medical Missionary. Yet even then, for every Arab influenced, you would have a dozen

Africans. I went this morning with Dr. Young to his dispensary and saw some bad cases. And I thought of Christ and the intensely practical way He showed His love and sympathy for us. Yet there is this great difference between the African and the Arab in their reception of truth and its appreciation—

" The African, like a hungry man, takes what is offered, and feels grateful, while the Arab spurns the offer and looks for stimulants and bribes. Surely the African ought to have the preference and precedence in the Church's work. Do you know I can't help thinking that somewhere to the north of Lake Victoria Nyanza the Arab will learn to his surprise that we, the British, are his masters, and that under our care, even the despised African may become his superior.

" John Young enticed me out into the desert with him for a camel ride. We had no proper saddle. I had thin trousers and weakened muscles from our sea trip, and of all the rides ever I had, camel riding seems far and away to take the cake for making an amateur miserable, aye, unutterably miserable in half an hour. I was too short to get my legs to rest comfortably on the beast's neck. I tried posting and change of position, and rigid cavalry position, but it was simply atrocious. Several times I thought my right kidney was displaced. Of course Dr. Young knew I was miserable, but he didn't let on, and I really think he was wicked enough to chuckle quietly as he thought my pride wouldn't let me say die, though honesty wouldn't let me say I was enjoying the ride.

" I have heard recently that our station at Kibwezi occupies one of the most charming sites, and a climate which all the year round is most enjoyable. Just fancy

then what we might make of it in a few years, and, if the Arab influence does not step in, what a people we may have about us. There is indeed something, I can't tell what, a something in simple human nature as we have it in Central Africa, which to every good mind is most attractive. You need only to see these Africans of the interior to love them. I should very much like my future to be spent with these Africans.

" Do you know they are fond of music ? One good missionary I know went to an African village one day, and began to sing a hymn. As he sang he supplemented his want of ear by elevation of chin and stretch of neck, at what should have been the higher notes, till at last the African audience could stand it no longer and were obliged to throw themselves on the grass to suppress the almost uncontrollable laughter which the earnest singer had aroused."

On his arrival at Mombasa he wrote home :—

(*21st February.*)

" We arrived at this place a few days ago after a fairly pleasant voyage down the East African coast. We had a very different reception from the officials here, to what we had on the Congo in 1885. Every one seemed to be kinder than the other, and from the Administrator downwards we have had extreme kindness and courtesy shown us. Mombasa is one of the prettiest, in fact the prettiest place I have ever seen. Thousands of coco-nut palms, a beautiful bay, bright sunny skies, and an atmosphere which is not at all oppressive, make up a most delightful place and climate. It is the hottest season of the year, yet no one seems to be ill, and the heat is nothing like that at the mouth of

the Congo. I notice that nearly all the white men here look well and browned, and have not the pale washed-out appearance so common on the African West coast. I have said that Mombasa is pretty, and that I have never seen a prettier place, yet Drs. Macdonald and Macpherson tell me (as in fact everybody does), that this place isn't even a patch on Kibwezi.

" I believe this really to be the case, so if all goes as we hope, we should be very happy at our station. I was greatly amused at the railway here, a kind of switch-back over which messages and officials pass across the island on which Mombasa stands. Mombasa is a lovely place. If Miss Janie could only have a few hours with her pallette and pencils, she could produce a picture that would sell anywhere. A lovely bay, lined with green, and thousands of coco-nut palms. In the bay itself all sorts of craft, from the Mail steamer to the primitive dug-out. A large fort in good preservation and still inhabited, though built over 300 years ago by the Portuguese. Houses of all patterns and shapes and heights, thrusting their whitewash against the green background and blue skies. Rugged rocks showing out of the bluff on which the town stands, and in the water beneath the rocks, the many-tinted reflection of the houses : all make up a lovely picture. Within an hour of our arrival I was approaching the house of the Administrator for East Africa. Presently a sentry saluted, then I passed through a little garden, and a guard with fixed bayonets turned out. The next minute I was face to face with the Administrator, who received me very kindly and invited me to stay with him while I should be waiting in Mombasa.

" After a pleasant night, we went in the morning to

the officers and began to arrange for getting our caravan together.

"On 23rd February we got away from Mombasa, and sailed up a nine-mile winding creek to Banderini, where we pitched our camp. This place is a starting point for many caravans going into the interior of Africa. What a night that was. Close to our big bell tent was a bush boma in which were a number of donkeys, and during the night they favoured us with selections, soprano, alto, tenor, bass. We had many foreign notes in the music, and hundreds of attempts to recover lost chords. The combinations would have put many a Harmonic Society to the blush. On the 26th February I broke up camp about 5.30 a.m., only to find our lazy Arabs not ready. Chop had to be served out, loads to be arranged and fixed on the donkeys. The donkeys themselves seemed to enjoy the fun, for they lay down when asked to stand up, bobbed off when wished to stand still, rolled over and over in spite of boxes and slappings, till their loads stood out from their bodies in all sorts of curious positions. I knew there was no use in worrying or fretting, so I calmly squatted down and took in the scene. Sometimes it was too much for me, and I could scarcely keep my seat for laughing. What wrangling and cursing and shouting! Sometimes it seemed as though somebody had to die in the next minute, judging from the gestures and language of an angry and excited Arab, and such expressions were freely interchanged between the men as 'Am I your donkey?' 'Did you buy me?' 'Am I your slave?'

"We got off about 10 a.m., in time to enter a big shower of rain, and presently passed our donkeys,

huddled together under a sheltering tree. Then our road lay up the hill side of Raibai, and here at the mission station I intended asking for a man to be sent back to bring on a box that had been left. On our approaching the mission station, what was our surprise to hear a congregation of 200–300 persons singing a well-known hymn tune! The music was led by an organ and was very good. It was a Sunday, and I had forgotten it entirely. There we stood outside the church, dirty, soaked, with rifles in hand, looking like two scarcerows, or brigands, but the music was so good that I couldn't help humming the tune with the singers, and if I couldn't understand the words they sang, I know that I worshipped God as sincerely as those inside the place. We got a man in the village, and passed on to our camp No. 2 at Mwache. At camp No. 2 we had to wait till next day for our donkeys to turn up. While waiting an immense caravan of over 600 persons came into camp from Uganda. It was a sight worth seeing. First came a tall stalwart fellow with a long spear in hand, then a couple of ostriches, then men with spears and long bamboos, then men carrying tusks of ivory, then men arrayed in all the colours of the rainbow, or decked out from head to foot in birds' feathers. Then more men with ivory tusks, then repeat the same array. Here and there were men armed with breechloaders, and at intervals a man carrying a huge drum, which he beat as furiously as he could and carried in the most awkward manner possible. Then came goats, sheep, cows, bulls, donkeys, one queenly little Egyptian girl, riding a donkey, and last of all the stragglers, poor men and women, reduced to skeletons, some of them carrying children, perhaps one or more of the latter born on the

long march of about 60 camps, and the poor souls scarcely able to drag themselves along. In the evening we dined with the two officers in command and they showed us a pile of ivory weighing about five tons, and worth from £10,000 to £20,000 sterling.

" For the next two or three days we marched along a good 12 ft. wide road, made in connection with our mission, as a means of transport between the coast and Kibwezi. It was very pleasant to walk along in the cool of the morning, with thousands of beautiful flowers and fruits on either side of the road, here and there birds of beautiful plumage flitting to and fro, balmy air, in short all nature seeming to tell the goodness of the Creator. On the 6th day the made road ceased, and we struck a native path, and entered a mountainous district, with heights 4,000–5,000 ft. above sea level. From our camp at Maungu we had a magnificent view, and at our feet, running away between the mountains to the distant horizon and seeming like some narrow endless sea, was an immense plain, literally alive with antelopes, zebras, bucks, giraffe. I managed to get two bucks in half-an-hour one morning, with two cartridges, and another morning a single cartridge (M. Henry) brought down a beautiful antelope (Grant's) with two long tapering horns. The meat would weigh 300–400 lbs., and you may be sure we had kidney soup, liver stew, and steaks for the next three days. I had a shot at zebra, but as they were already startled by the noise of our caravan, it was with difficulty, after the first good sight of them, that I could approach within 1,000 yards, and of course I can't say whether my shot told or not.

" It was by far the pleasantest journey I have had in Africa, though the men of our caravan were in some

instances the very worst. For the first few days I was patience itself. I did anything and everything to help them in their work, frequently I was first up in the morning, last to leave camp, first in at the new camp and the last to go to sleep at night.

" One day however matters came to a crisis. We had thirty miles or so to go from where we were, and no water could be had along the beaten track. What should we do ? Go on ten miles and carry water with us from where we were, then camp for the night, and next day make a march of other twenty miles. It was mid-day, and the lazy Arabs, always lazy, demurred. The headman shouted and gesticulated like a madman. I looked calmly on for a bit, after requesting all to move on, but seeing that gentleness was mistaken for weakness, I lifted a persuader in the shape of a stick, and walked briskly towards the headman. I suppose my eyes must have told him that I meant action, for he suddenly apologised, and threw up his hands in supplication. So did a very troublesome and impertinent guard, who was doomed for a double share of persuader, if he hadn't behaved properly. In a few minutes all was over and we went on as happily as if nothing had happened.

" This sort of thing is a constant accompaniment of African marching, and while it is a trial of one's patience, it is also a test of resolution and firmness when the crisis comes.

" We reached Kibwezi on the 15th March, since which time we have been busy with station work. In a few weeks we shall begin brick making."

During this three weeks' trip, Charters' previous experience with African natives was invaluable, for

though it had been gained from the other side of the Continent, in essentials the carriers were all alike. Another account of his journey is given in a letter to Dr. Flett, written after his arrival :—

" We arrived here on the 15th inst., after a very pleasant march from the coast. You will agree with me that we have not lost much time in getting here. Within an hour of our arrival in Mombasa I was with the Acting Administrator, arranging about getting off to Kibwezi, and when once we struck camp at Banderini on Sunday, Feb. 26th, I kept our caravan at it as much as I could, till the end. You know the Arab tendency to work or travel one day, and rest two days. This tendency showed itself once or twice in our caravan, which, unfortunately for me, was a contract caravan arranged by the company and an influential Arab. Then we were taken for green-horns, and as I was clean shaved, I was thought to be a mere stripling. The Arabs founp out their mistake one day when an occasion demanded decisive action, and both Niampara (head-man) and the Askaris were suddenly changed from despots to willing, humble, obedient servants. Though I looked most ferocious for a few minutes, and spoke pretty strongly, I had to hide my face afterwards to conceal my laughter, when I thought how the tables were turned. I find an instinctive sense of humour and a great love of fun to be good, but yet dangerous, things out here, since if not kept in check the native, who searches the face for a confirmation of what is ordered to be done, at once takes advantage of any apparent insincerity or jocularity.

" We had altogether the pleasantest march I have ever had, and that too over country as pretty and as

fertile as any I have seen in Africa. After the 6th day we got into a mountainous country showing several beautiful valleys, and one enormous plain, like an endless sea. This plain literally moves with game, zebra, antelope, giraffe. The greatest difficulty, by the way, is want of water, and in the cold (dry) season, it is a serious difficulty. For several days we travelled along a road twelve feet wide made by Sir Wm. Mackinnon's agent. Already thirty miles of this road lead towards the coast from our station, and in the course of the present year, all that remains to make, will easily be completed. I am sending a report home to Sir William, telling him what I think of the road and the possibility of utilising a traction engine on it. At some places you could ride for miles on a bicycle, at other points, especially at the Kibwezi end, the road, while in every respect suitable for oxen, would need a little touching up at the ' nullahs ' so as to reduce the grades to (at the maximum) 1 in 15, if an engine is to be of service.

" Then again Sir William has instructed his agent to sink wells every ten miles or so on the roadside, so that the water difficulty will be got over also. You would have enjoyed being with us on the march. Just fancy walking along this good road on cool mornings, with all sorts of flowers and coloured bushes on either side of you, beautiful birds flitting to and fro, pigeons cooing their love songs to the morn and all nature smiling and saying God is good. Our usual programme was to strike tents before daylight, then go off about 5.30 a.m., and get into camp for the rest of the day by 11 a.m. As we went on, the mornings and evenings became colder, till even a double blanket was barely sufficient to keep one com-

fortable. Yet just now the sun is almost right overhead. This morning, when I rose shortly before 6 a.m., the thermometer stood at 64° Fahr.—probably it will reach a few degrees over 80° by mid-day.

" For the first six days of our march we found all the villages enclosed in a thick bush boma, the only entrance being by a small gate. Then, when you get into the mountainous country, you find the natives living up on the heights. These precautionary measures are intended as protection against the Masai. The main business of this Masai tribe is to plunder native caravans and steal cattle. They are in many respects comparable with our old Highland cattle raiders. Their abode is among the higher hills and they come down at intervals to work mischief. This will be a splendid country when the road is complete, or better still the railway, and perhaps the roving Masai will then become useful members of society, policemen or railway porters.

" We reached Kibwezi on the 15th inst., and were glad to see Mr. Watson's face as he came to meet us. He looks very well indeed, though a flowing beard gives him a somewhat patriarchal appearance. He has done marvels in the way of work at this station, and in fact is really another Mackay (of Kibwezi). I am indeed glad to have him as a co-worker, and hope that, in time, his earnestness and labours may have their due reward. I should be glad to have him appointed co-superintendent with myself, but, of course, this doesn't lie with me. The laying out of our station is all that could be desired, and reflects credit on Dr. Stewart's judgment. We have some beautiful views from the place. There can be no doubt but that the hills, five miles away, and behind these the snow-capped ridges

of Kilimanjaro, greatly influence the climate here. It is mild, dry and healthy. We have really no mosquitos, and don't need to use a mosquito curtain.

" Since coming here, I have been very busy arranging my house and making rough furniture, this is really all I have done. By and by I hope to begin town visitation, with native help as to the language.

" There are immense possibilities in this place and its future. May we have the patience to wait, and the earnest perseverance that will enable us to work till the good times come, when perhaps a full schoolroom and a crowded church may be the outward show of a reward and a harvest which we have sown and reaped.

" I find that we could utilise a turbine just behind our station, it would saw up timber for us. We have also limestone, and some other kind of stone, which might be utilised for building purposes. But we must go softly till we see what's what."

The Uganda railway, completed in 1903, now runs over the whole of this course and far beyond. An excellent description of Mombasa and the country generally will be found in Colonel Patterson's world-famous book " The Man-Eaters of Tsavo." Tsavo lies about two-thirds of the way up from the coast at Mombasa to Kibwezi, and Charters passed right through this place, so soon afterwards to be associated with Colonel Patterson's gallant exploits. It was from Tsavo that Patterson took over the construction of the line in 1898. Kibwezi is in the middle of the southern game reserve, of which he was afterwards appointed Ranger. Between it and Nairobi lie the famous Athi Plains, unrivalled as a game preserve.

CHAPTER VII

THE FIRST HOME OF THE MISSION

THE site at Kibwezi had been chosen by the pioneers, as has already been stated, on account of its beauty. Little was then known of tropical conditions of life for Europeans, and the early settlers were enchanted with the forest scenery, and, finding water in abundance, imagined nothing more was to be asked.

Professor Gregory, whose book, "The Great Rift Valley," published in 1896, describes his journeyings over this part and shows intimate knowledge of the principal tribes, says of it :—

"Kibwezi station is situated on an old lava sheet around the sources of the River Kibwezi. Any one who has experienced the delight of suddenly entering one of the chestnut groves of the Italian slopes of the Alps, after weeks among the monotonous fir woods of the Swiss highlands, will understand the joy with which after weeks of miserable scrub, I entered the forest of Kibwezi."

When Dr. Stewart left the Mission in 1892, the work was carried on by Dr. Moffat and Mr. Watson, who had to see to the building of houses, attending the sick and conducting services, with all the added difficulties of a strange tongue and a strange people—the Wakamba—to deal with. One wonders sometimes how such work is done in the first instance at all. It is a very different

matter when some of the natives of the country have been educated and can interpret, and when the missionaries themselves have become familiar with the ways of the people.

It was in December of that year that Dr. Moffat left to join Sir Gerald Portal's mission to Uganda, and a short time later, Mr. Linton, who had been assisting in the work, died. Then Charters was appointed successor to Dr. Moffat, and arrived, as we have seen, in March, 1893, fully equipped, full of zeal, and without any idea of the dangers of the climate. He brought out with him Mr. Paterson as agriculturist, for special stress had been laid on the fact that agriculture must be a prime factor in the development of the country. The Wakamba are a pastoral people, not blood-thirsty warriors like their neighbours the Masai, and besides the opening thus afforded of getting hold of them, there was the object of making the Mission itself to some extent self-supporting. Coffee was thus introduced for the first time into the district, and is now in an amazingly flourishing condition.

British East Africa was renamed Kenya Colony after the Great War, and the Kenya Court in the East African Pavilion at the great Exhibition of 1924, which will always be spoken of familiarly as " Wembley," was one of the most interesting of all the exhibits. Among its products the coffee takes high rank and is of excellent quality. Maize is also of great importance, and the sisal industry has a big future before it. Owing to the elevation of the ground, plants which could hardly be looked for under ordinary tropical conditions can be produced, and wonderful crops of cereals : wheat, oats, barley, rye, are grown.

Even in those first days, the importance of agriculture for the country was seen, and a variety of seeds and agricultural implements of a sort suitable for transfer were brought out. By March, 1893, the station had been not only planned but laid out, and looked an ideal spot, situated in a lava belt, with wide views of the glorious hills around. The buildings at that time are described :—

" Three dwelling houses of three apartments each, one baraza, one store, one workshop and dwelling-house combined, one church, four workmen's houses of two apartments each, one cattle kraal and two cattle houses. These buildings are constructed of wattle and grass but with strong frames of hard timber, with mortised and tenoned posts, on which rest wall plates, with tie-beams to bind the whole together. With attention to repairs, if lined with sun-dried bricks, they are capable of lasting several years."

At the time of Charters' arrival there was not much medical work to be done among the natives, for they had not learned to rely on the English doctor, but there was plenty of work of the same kind among Europeans to hand immediately.

Very soon after Charters' installation there arrived at Kibwezi a trader who had been a fellow-passenger in the same steamer with him, and come on up-country later. He was ill with fever, and after treatment, in spite of Charters' injunctions, he would go on with his journey, though not properly cured. No sooner had he left than Mr. Watson went down with black-water fever, and for three days the issue hung in the balance. While the situation was still critical, a messenger came back from the camp of Mr. Dick, the trader, saying that

he was lying by the River Athi, about eighteen miles away, in a prostrate state. So Charters had to make a forced march and, finding his ex-patient unconscious, had him carried back and put to bed in his own dwelling, where he lay for ten days. After that he insisted on starting once more, before he was fit for it, and eight days' march farther on he died, though the Kibwezi station did not hear of this until two months later.

In the intervals of attending to these patients, as both doctor and nurse, Charters, mindful of Sir William Mackinnon's injunctions, had been clearing out the road to the Mission, which was badly grown over after the rains.

Mr. George Wilson was in charge of road-making at Tsavo, where there was at that time no prospect of a railway. He sent a message to Charters, telling him he was ill, and needed help, so as soon as Mr. Watson was better, Charters went back to Tsavo to attend to him. While on this visit, he received instructions to define the boundaries of the 100 square miles of land which the British East Africa Company had granted the Mission camp. This must have been technical and arduous work, especially for one who had not been trained as a surveyor, but there was nothing for it but to obey, and during the month of June David Charters was here, there and everywhere, on excursions for survey work, whenever he could be spared from the camp.

In the midst of this he heard that one of the German missionaries stationed at Ikutha, thirty miles from Kibwezi, was very ill with fever, and had sent an urgent request for help. He did not hesitate a moment, and took that journey too, but he was too late to save the German, who was, however, alive when he arrived.

Interspersed with all this, he undertook the work of making a garden to supply vegetables, which had been planned by his predecessor. This was formed out of some swampy ground through which the Kibwezi stream or river flowed, far too near the Mission houses for health. The ground had to be raised by barrows of earth being tipped on to it, so that the stream should be confined to a six-foot channel; regular navvy work it was. It was done, however, and eventually an amazing variety of products came from that carefully reclaimed ground. Coffee, oranges, mangoes, pineapples, as well as vegetables and vines.

While this was going on, and in the immediately previous years, all sorts of critical movements had been made in and about the vast territory now included in Uganda and Kenya Colonies. Much exploration had been done, and in 1890 Uganda had been assigned to the British sphere of influence by an Anglo-German agreement, and the Chartered Company agreed to administer it. However, the financial strain was found to be too great, and in 1892 the Company wanted to withdraw. They carried on until the end of 1893, and the fate of the country hung in the balance. Much was done for its retention by Bishop Tucker whose splendid book, "Eighteen Years in Uganda," brought out in 1908, should be read in connection with this story. In January, 1893, Sir Gerald Portal went on a Special Commission of enquiry into the country, and just as Charters reached his new work a fresh treaty had been concluded with Mwanga, King of Uganda, placing his country under British protection. In June the following year a formal Protectorate was declared over Uganda,

and this was subsequently extended to take in the countries eastward and northward.

Kibwezi was on the direct route from the coast to Uganda, and Government caravans constantly passed through, so the news received there was first hand, and vitally important it was to the small band of devoted men at the station.

CHAPTER VIII

THE DAILY LIFE OF KIBWEZI

FROM this time onward David Charters' letters, mainly to his friends in Paisley, give a good idea of the new life so different from that he had quitted.

(*Kibwezi Station, British East Africa. 20th March*, 1893.

"I am now living under my own roof, a three-roomed glass house. One room I use as dispensary, and we have a good stock of medicines. The middle room is the dining-room and No. 3 is my bedroom, and as we had only bare walls on my arrival, I have been rigging up washhand-stand, brackets, stands for trunks, and hat rack, out of posts and old chop boxes, hiding all defects here and there with a little white cloth which also makes things look clean. In our dining-room I hope to hang up a number of old coloured calendars. Then make a table or two and a few chairs and settle comfortably to work for a few years. I have been noting the temperature here for the last few days. It is about 63° or 64° Fahr. at 6 a.m. and gradually rises to 3° or 4° above summer heat about noon. That is 83° or 84°. It does sometimes rise to 90°. We have our porridge and cow's milk every morning before 7 a.m., then breakfast at noon—meat, soup, vegetables; tea, and dinner at 6 or 6.30 p.m.

"When I get settled, and get the language spoken

hereabout under way, I shall indeed be happy. One thing only is lacking, viz., the completion of the road to the coast. Better still would be the railway. But with either an accomplished fact, I should recommend all invalids with chest complaints to come here, and as for ladies, well, if they wish to do some really useful work in the world, in conjunction with friends they can respect and love, then here's a fine field for them. We shall have better houses in time and every comfort.

" I cannot tell you how highly I think of Mr. Watson and his work here. He deserves to have the honour of being chief of the Mission."

(*From a letter to " Pat " written 26th March*, 1893.)

" We have beautiful surroundings, at one end of the main road through the station we have an avenue, at the other end we see some five miles away, a range of hills 5,000–7,000 ft. above sea level, and away beyond this range, some forty miles off, are the snow-capped peaks of Kilimanjaro some 20,000 ft. above sea level. We have a garden of about eight acres, well under cultivation, in it we have Indian corn, wheat, barley, potatoes, coffee, carrots, onions, cabbage, turnip, peas, beans, cucumber, melon, pumpkin, vegetable marrow, sweet potatoes and tomatoes, and just at the edge of the garden, runs a little stream, clear as crystal, from which we get our water supply. This little stream evidently comes from the melting snow on Kilimanjaro ; it suddenly appears as a spring in our station. Then the climate is very dry and not at all depressing, yet this is our hottest season, the sun's declination only changing to North a week ago. I have no doubt as to the immense possibilities lying dormant in this place,

or the rewards which those who work patiently and earnestly will reap. This place, and all East Africa, would suit Europeans admirably, our Highland crofters, our consumptives might do well to look in this direction, some two hundred miles further in, the Congo country reaches a height of 5,000 ft. above sea level, and the European officers are glad of a fire in the house to warm them.

" There are plenty of cattle in the country, we have a number of bullocks, two cows, a flock of goats, a few sheep, and three donkeys in one station, and like true Scotsmen we have our porridge and cow's milk every morning. This is infinitely superior to Congo, where the climate is damp, there are lots of mosquitos, no cattle and plenty of fever.

" I have sent a report on the road to Sir William Mackinnon, especially speaking of the possibility of utilising a traction engine in drawing loads up to this place from the coast. I shouldn't be surprised to see a couple of engines out here soon, that is if the railway itself doesn't come before them. We hear that Sir Gerald Portal is expected to return this way from Uganda some time in August. I hope he'll say ' Let's have the railway.' We have about twenty natives at work on the station and fifteen Swahilis ; we could have just now a hundred natives if we cared to ; they get six rupees a month as pay, and this is quite enough for all the work they do. They are a fine race of people, and docile, though they go about with bows and poisoned arrows. They never come to our service in the church which could seat 200–300 easily. The service has no interest for them, because of our not knowing their language. Poor souls, as I hear them drumming

for hours at night, and breaking in at regular intervals with a kind of chant, I pity them. They know so little and spend so much of their time in wriggling and dancing. They don't seem to have any religion, and lay their dead in the bush for the hyenas to devour. These animals haunt our station every night, actually coming to our verandahs and snuffing close to our heads with only a grass partition between, yet no one dreams of touching them. And they on their part do their work most thoroughly, not leaving a single bone of man or donkey deposited for them the day before.

" I am not at all sorry I came here. We have plenty of hard work and some hard knocks before us, yet we can face all, and I believe we shall enjoy good health. Should the country be opened up, this station will be one of the first places in all Africa. We lately added some vine cuttings to our garden and already some have struck root, so that in two years or so we shall have grapes. I have about twenty letters to write this mail, most of them as long as this, some even longer. You see what it is to be Superintendent of a station.

" Our Mails are not at all regular here and we expect the mail runners from near Uganda every day on their way to the coast. This letter will be taken by them when they come.

" It is now bed-time and I am very tired. To-day, 27th, I carried out my first operation under chloroform at Kibwezi. It was a case of shoulder-joint disease, and I made an incision about five inches long and explored all the scapula, the ribs, and the shoulder joint with both probe and finger. The man is all right as yet, and is now sound asleep. I offered him a cup of cow's milk just an hour ago, but for some unknown prejudice,

he declined it ; it almost made him sick to look at it ; he took a little Brand's beef tea.

" I don't think I shall have many eye cases for some time to come."

Sunday, 7th May, 1893.)

" I am writing now as we are not sure of the day when the down-mail from Uganda may come in. Your letter of 9th February reached me here by last mail. You will see that I write on a Sunday, Sunday here is very different from Sunday at home. True it is, that our workmen and ourselves don't work ; that every man turns out clean and respectable ; but we have, instead of Sabbath bells, a peaceful calm reigning all round the station. At 10 a.m. we have our service in Kiswahili, and at 4 p.m., our English service. As yet we haven't touched the Wakamba people around. At our services we usually have a very small attendance ; most of our men being Mahommedans and not caring even to enter the church during service time. I confess that I like the calm and quiet of Kibwezi Sundays, yet better still do I like the Sundays where congregations meet to worship God, and where ofttimes the singing of some grand song of praise has carried my thoughts to where grander music and nobler songs are known. I am thinking seriously now of beginning the study of Kikamba and perhaps if I work hard, we may soon have our church filled with Wakamba, listening to the story of God's great love.

" We are sometimes apt in busy times to forget the Unseen in the seen around us, and it seems as though we, who try to live and work for God, are on a wild goose chase. I know a Minister's life at home is no life

of ease ; out here in Africa, Elders cease from troubling, and Deacons are at rest, yet we need all the gentleness and patience and love we have, to win native workmen and those around us. I have two native boys as servants besides two Swahilis. Of course these boys do very little and receive little pay in return. My smallest boy, a real pet, named Kaloji, receives a hundred rings of thin brass wire per month and his Chakula (food). When I go out, as I did the other afternoon on a hurried twenty-mile march, to succour a young inexperienced trader who had camped with eighty men on the banks of a river, where he contracted a fever and lost consciousness for three or four days, Kaloji is eager to go with me, and marches in front as proud as a lamplighter, with my gun over his shoulder. I took my rifle and shot gun, a few medicines and a bed and tent following on behind. Fortunately two guinea-fowl appeared about 5 p.m. and one of them fell to our cooking-pot. I gave it to the three boys who accompanied me. About 6 p.m. it got quite dark and our journey after this was anything but pleasant. On either hand we heard the hyenas laughing, while now and then I fell over a stick or a tree lying across the narrow grass-covered footpath. On reaching the sick man's camp I found him very ill, and no wonder. He had gone into the valley of the river close to the water and pitched his camp. Here he was, then, with over eighty men, lying in a regular fever den. After attending to him, I lay down on a few boxes for the night, and next morning I had a hammock rigged up and brought him here. He soon revived with Kibwezi air and fresh milk ; but he is a curious chap and seems to lack some of the finer qualities, particularly a sense of gratitude. In twenty-four hours I had

eaten only a handful of boiled barley and a leg of fowl, but Kaloji's song, a weird native chant, quite dispelled all feeling of hunger.

" I hope in a few days to leave the station for a place thirty miles away, and from this point I am to begin clearing the grass and shrubs from the road till I reach Kibwezi. Kaloji says he is going with me, he can't stay behind. So I suppose, being a real pet, he must come. The young trader I speak of above, came out from Scotland and sailed in the same steamer with me. On his arrival his brother sent him in various directions trading and latterly he came here. He was in high spirits when he first came to Kibwezi, and as he had travelled along the good wagon road most of the way, he spoke of African travel as most delightful. Ten days after leaving Kibwezi, for some place in an easterly direction, some of his men came with a brief note, written in Kiswahili by his boy, telling of his illness. Within half-an-hour I was off, and after an eight hours' quick march through bush and long grass, I came in the darkness to the River Athi where he had made his camp. The place was a regular fever den, low-lying, damp, you couldn't see ten yards in front of you before 7 a.m., owing to the mist rising from the damp soil and water. I rigged up a net hammock and ten men were told off to carry him here. We slept one night on the road in returning and came into the station yesterday. To-day he is quite convalescent, but, instead of thanking me, he tells me that he is annoyed at my drugging him. However I don't mind what he says, since he is better, and when he goes away again, if his pride and rashness land him in a mess, I shall not go to his assistance unless he himself sends for me.

" In setting out on this hurried march I had a most amusing experience. Coming to a little stream, my boys passed through the water, but as I had no wish to get soaked just then, and as I was in a hurry, I beckoned to a native bathing in the water to come to me. We were entire strangers to each other, and this mode of salutation didn't seem to suit the native mind. He stood up, hesitated, then glancing towards his cloth and bow and arrows lying on the rocks, he moved in their direction. I also moved in the same direction to prevent his getting them, and when he came within reach, I gently caught him and turned him round so that I could mount his back.

" I came to a river and couldn't get across
Singing Polly-wolly doodle . . .
I jumped upon a nigger for I thought he was a horse
Singing Polly-wolly doodle. . . ."

Having clasped his neck firmly with both arms, I indicated to him to go across. He moved slowly and somehow or other a curious notion to climb a rock filled his head, and falling on his knees, he dropped me waist deep into the river. In falling I struck my right knee against the rock and the pain of the blow was simply awful for a few minutes, but the case was so funny that I half-howled, half-laughed, and the poor man, almost frightened to death, looked most imploringly up from the water, as much as to say ' Don't beat me, I couldn't help it.' If ever he comes my way again I will give him a small present.

" You may remember me speaking about bees in Africa. Well, the natives here go in greatly for bees and honey in this way. They hang hollow cylinders of wood from the branches of high trees, and in a few

months, the cylinders are filled with honey. The whole countryside shows beehives hanging from trees, and as the landscape shows miles and miles of white and yellow and red flowers, besides farms of Indian corn, the material for the bees is very plentiful. The honey is very good and we frequently boil some of it with fresh tomatoes, and after this mixture is a day old, we have a splendid jam, with just a touch of a fermentative process going on. I daresay such jam would fetch a big price at home.

" We have all our men busy working at the river-bed, preparing the place for a permanent garden. When this is done and I get back from the road I hope to begin and make bricks from the ant-hills around. One of these hills only a hundred yards from my house will give enough clay to build a store fifty feet by twenty feet. Then when our carpenter arrives, we shall put a wooden roof on each of our houses.

" By last mail I received a large parcel. On opening it I found some fine linen suits of clothes, besides light tweed. I don't know why they should be sent to me, but as Lady Mackinnon is the sender, I am inclined to think she must have a warm regard for me. I am greatly delighted with a silk or satin hat padded so that it is over an inch thick. It is as soft as down, and is evidently the type of hat Sir William wears. I mean to wear it only on state occasions, and also to keep it as long as I can as a memento of Sir William and his good lady.

" So much about Kibwezi and myself. You must think me long-winded and disjointed, and if you do, I plead guilty to both charges, but you know I always write like this to those I like best.

"You say in yours that you have been reading 'Motley's Dutch Republic.' So have I, but as yet I haven't got on any length with it. I am sure it will be interesting.

"I have just finished my third reading of 'Sartor Resartus' and 'Past and Present.' There can be no doubt but that the writer was inspired to write as he did. How his words prove their high origin in the inspiration they give to others. To my mind these writings of Carlyle are but chips from the workshop at Nazareth, our New Testament teaching applied to the nineteenth century and its needs.

"As yet I have not had an hour's sickness, and as the country develops, even any little risk there is will disappear. I think I will drop my life insurance. I am as well here as at home, in fact they tell me I am stouter. You know also my great desire, a serious one, to live and work till a silver crown is mine."

(*8th May*, 1893.)

"Out here the plants grow so quickly and thickly that their growth seems to be a race upwards and ends in a survival of the fittest. The whole district just now is out in flower, white, red, yellow, and striped, and the bees are busy storing up honey in the hollow cylinders I spoke of.

"Some native women with their lassies come to the door of my house anxious to see all round. I invite them in and show them pictures and photos. One of my pictures is a fisher lass with a large basket of herring. How these poor native women stand and gaze and talk to each other and laugh and then look behind the photos to see what's there. Then I have two little

stucco heads of a child crying, one with mouth wide open, and one with mouth shut. These models are objects to great amusement to the natives and they all like to come and look at the *Mwana Musungn* (children of the white man). I wish I could talk the Kikamba fluently, but I think I begin to see the way to make progress, and then having won their confidence by little acts of kindness, I shall have the great pleasure of telling them of God's great love. I have already made many friends at Kibwezi, and the white men working with me are all on the best of terms. I have had two or three turns round the countryside and from what I see of it, I should think there are great capabilities in the soil. We can have a cattle and sheep ranch in time, and utilise the oxen in ploughing. We have a plough here but I have asked for a heavier, stronger one. If all goes as we hope, we shall have a lovely place about us and, as the country is cleared, we shall have splendid views of the mountains to the south-west and north-west of us. I daresay Mrs. Stewart, of Lovedale, at the Meeting at Barshaw would not say very much about Kibwezi, but while the houses in a sense may be called rushed up dwellings, especially the roofs, which show two grades of inclination, and thus leak badly, the general arrangements of the station, and the selection of the site will always reflect great credit on the pioneer, Dr. Stewart.

" I expect to leave here on Wednesday for a point thirty miles away and thence to begin clearing the waggon road towards Kibwezi. Perhaps I may get a chance of some zebra and antelope while camping out. All natives will travel readily with a man who is a reputed shot, and although I have scarcely ever gone hunting

I find already that I am considered a good shot by the natives, and every second morning, while calling the roll, I am besieged with men anxious to go with me to work on the road.

"I have not had many interesting medical cases as yet. Only one operation under chloroform for a swollen shoulder joint. I have however got one cataract case in hand and, when I get back from clearing the road, I mean to operate: should this be successful it is probable that many others afflicted with eye complaints will come in for operation. I saw a splendid case of hare-lip which, as you know, is one of the easiest operations, and at the same time an operation which in its results is likely to produce noticeable effects. The native, however, was a visitor to Kibwezi and seemed much afraid to trust me, so I didn't press him.

"I have not yet tried the incubator, the large oil drums I thought of utilising for the purpose, being still down country. But I am quite a live-stock proprietor without much bargaining on my part. I have got two sheep as brown as a hazelnut, and some twenty-five fowls, with seven lovely little chickens. These latter are much smaller than chicks at home. We never feed them and they seem to thrive wonderfully on what they pick up about the garden and its surroundings. I hope soon to have over a hundred chicks and perhaps within a month or so a cow of my own."

(*In camp, Mt. O-wa-nde. 22nd May*, 1893.)

"You tell me about Prof. Cheshire and his original observations *re* plants and their insect enemies.

"Out here we have thousands of insects, curious beetles, lovely butterflies, many of the latter very

valuable and much prized by collectors. Then we have lots of insect pests about our gardens, and some fine illustrations of how, for defence, or for hunting purposes, insects imitate the plants or grass about which they cling. You couldn't tell some of them from a bud or a leaf or a blade of grass, till you look very closely at them and see them move. Mr. Paterson at our station is a practical gardener. We got some twenty vine cuttings at Mombasa and carried them in a box to Kibwezi. After our sixteen days' march, they nearly all seemed to be sending out rootlets, and when planted (in what proved a very damp place during the rains) some of them broke out into leaf. But now I fear only two of them are going to do well.

" When I look all round my camp here, at hills and plain, at sky and sunshine, at grass and tree and bird and beast, and drink in the fresh cooling air I can't help thinking :—

Thy Bountiful Care
What tongue can recite ?
It breathes in the air,
It shines in the light,
It streams from the hills,
It descends to the plain,
And sweetly distils
In the dew and the rain.

I wish I could write a hymn like this. I often feel just what the writer felt, only my tongue and speech are poorer than his.

" Yesterday was Sunday and I had a very quiet day in camp. In the evening my men, with about ten strangers seeking for work came into camp. I had a big fire made close to the door of my tent, and then

after tea I sat in my chair and smoked a cigar while I listened and thought. Here were thirty men, many of them with kind happy faces, some of them gentlemen though wearing no clothes. How little they knew and thought about the future, or even the present. A bit of pumpkin and some roasted or boiled Indian corn, a little bit of brass wire to ornament their bodies, a fire to sleep beside at night, and that's all. What did God think of those thirty Wakamba I wonder ?

" By and by a strolling minstrel who visited me at Kibwezi, and to whom I had twice given a few beads, struck up a weird song on a one-stringed instrument. He had a cap on his head made of baboon skin and a big war-knife slung at his side. I knew the refrain of his song, and after listening for half-an-hour or so, I stole off to bed and soon forgot all my musings in sleep.

" I hope to go back to Kibwezi on Tuesday or Wednesday and begin in earnest the study of Kiswahili and Kikamba."

CHAPTER IX

SURVEY WORK

(*11th June*, 1893.)

"We are very happy in our work here. Our health (Paterson's and self) has been excellent, not even a moment's sickness spite of hard work and a great deal of clearing down by the stream. Then, by a little thoughtfulness and tact, I have got the staff (European) so united that we never disagree. My instructions are put as suggestions. When tired I get a nice loaf made and a fresh cup of tea, and together we have a pleasant talk over what is to be done. One thing only is needed to complete our happiness and that is the ability to speak to the Wakamba in their own tongue, so that we could gather them on Sundays to hear the story of God's redeeming love. This I hope will come in time if we work and persevere.

"I should like to see you, too, for an hour, and tell you all my joys and hopes. You would be a good listener and counsellor I believe. But if I go on like this you will think me unmanly. Well, I will work away here and get up our brick houses and learn Kiswahili and Kikamba, and then when it is my privilege to see you face to face, I will just bore you with my talk and my stories.

"Since writing last I have had Major Smith, and later on, Captain Williams, from Uganda, staying with me

over a day. Smith has only one hand and is all bustle and activity. Captain Williams, you may remember, did most of the fighting in Uganda. He had many interesting stories to tell me and we became great friends. I liked his frank modest way of speaking and above all the kindly way in which he had handled his enemies, as soon as he had made them realise his power. Men of Captain Williams' type, hand in hand with Christian missionaries, would do Africa a power of good. The Captain speaks French and Turkish, besides Swahili and some Arabic. He was Turkish Interpreter to some Commission sent to Asia Minor and visited most of the Turkish fortresses there. At Kars, the place defended so well by General Williams in '54–'55, he was simply revered by the Sheikhs, who declared him to be a son of the general, whom he certainly does resemble a good deal.

" Captain Williams had three hundred and fifty souls with him, many of them being Emin's people. He has handed over Uganda to Sir Gerald Portal, and Sir Gerald has pressed Captain Macdonald, R.E., to remain in command, aided by Captain Arthur Portal, and a few other subordinates.

" I believe Sir Gerald wishes this country to be administered through Zanzibar, but of course it yet remains to be seen whether Government will exercise control in this channel, or through a Representative in Uganda and Mombasa. Then again Cecil Rhodes would take Uganda for the South Africa Company and spend £20,000 a year on it, if he could get it. The Railway is almost a certainty, at least for 150 miles beyond Kibwezi.

" I have received instructions from home to survey

and select one hundred square miles of territory for the Mission, so that plans can be prepared from my survey and submitted to the Administrator at Mombasa, and he, if satisfied, will get them legally transferred to the Mission at Zanzibar.

" So you see we are fairly settling down here. To-morrow I go off a day or so towards the Interior and fully expect to have a busy time with compass and chart. To the North of our station is a hill, 4,500 feet above sea level, and only five miles distant. I have often looked at one place on this hillside and fancied myself occupying a retired dwelling, not unlike that of Professor Blackie's near Oban, amid its trees. I think I'll include the hill in our territory, and some day perhaps my fancy may be reality. The more I see of this place the better I like it. This is our winter here, and we are glad to wear heavy clothes mornings and evenings. I did over twenty-six miles marching the other day, dressed exactly as I would be at home, only the hat being different, and felt no inconvenience from the tweed suit, collar and tie.

" At some of the stations further in, they have one hundred and twenty head of cattle. A good cow may be bought, one hundred and fifty miles from here, for about twelve rupees. I bought a large bullock last week for thirty rupees at Kibwezi. The same beast would fetch eighty rupees at Mombasa, and at least one hundred and twenty rupees at home. But you will know more about cattle than I do.

" As I write the drums are making a continuous din in the nearest village, and we can distinctly hear the singers breaking in with their chorus. We had a dance with drummers, etc., going on within a hundred yards

or so of my house for several nights. I sent a messenger to stop the noise. It stopped. Next night it was resumed, and again stopped by messenger. The next night again it was resumed, and my messenger was informed that it wouldn't be stopped though I came with guns. Accordingly I sent my boy with my rifle to fire one shot into the ground ; telling him to steal close up to the dancers before firing. He fired ; the dancers dropped their drums and fled for dear life, and the drums were collected and brought here. The whole district is laughing over the affair, and as nobody cares to claim the drums, they are here in my house.

" Poor souls, I pity them, and hope they will learn to work more, and loaf and dance less. Not that I object in the least to their dancing, but they will suffer for their inactivity when all the land now unoccupied, or uncultivated, is taken over by Government and given over to those who will use it. The Railway will be sure to bring crowds of settlers around Kibwezi and Kikuyu (6,500 ft. above sea level and 150 miles beyond Kibwezi)."

(*21st June*, 1893.)

" I have been very busy for the last few weeks running here and there, and though I might travel with every comfort if I wished, still, for economy's sake, I travel pretty much *à la Arabe* and with only one or two men. As I mentioned in another letter, I had instructions from Mr. Bruce to survey and roughly chart a hundred square miles of territory for the Mission. My charts and definitions of boundaries go to the Administrator at Mombasa by this mail and he will see that the transfer is legally drawn up and duly registered by

Judge Craknall in Zanzibar. Mr. Bruce thinks the Railway is almost a dead certainty, at least for 150 miles beyond Kibwezi. He is not sure whether Government will administer Uganda directly through a present representative or whether, as Sir Gerald Portal would like it, the administration will be through Zanzibar. At any rate we have made sure of our hundred square miles, and I have been careful to make it over, rather than under, the limit.

" During my surveying trip I came on a magnificent game country only fifteen miles from Kibwezi. I saw one rhinoceros, four giraffes, ostriches, hundreds of antelopes of all sizes and varieties, and zebras. Lions and hyenas howled round us all night, and I think it was a lion that I badly wounded one evening towards sundown. The beast came running towards me till it was quite near, then I fired at about two hundred yards and dropped it. It lay for a few minutes as though dead, then rolled about a bit, at last it got up and limped slowly away. I would have seen the end of the game, but as I had only another cartridge in my possession just then, and a little boy with me, I thought it prudent not to venture to too close quarters.

" I got two magnificent antelopes, one of them with fine horns, and the meat was welcomed heartily in camp. Here there is a magnificent hunting ground for some of your friends. I can guarantee them enough sport for six months and probably a few rhino charges and lion hunts on top, just to keep up the excitement. A Mr. J. Gardiner Muir, who owns an estate in Sutherlandshire, was up here with one of his gillies, on a hunting trip. In about six months he got, as he told me, four lions, sixty-seven rhinos and hundreds of

hartebeeste and antelope. On his return his caravan was merely a mass of men laden with trophies of the hunt.

" I am glad to get back to the station, and get into the regular routine of work, besides, frequent absences prevent my making Kibwezi the ideal station I should like to see. We are having our winter here just now, the weather is very cool and comfortable, the leaves are all falling from the trees, and our farm presents quite an autumn (not winter) like appearance.

" I have got quite a lot of hens and chickens about me now, but many of them, and their eggs also, are taken away in the night by little animals not unlike squirrels.

" To-day a man was carried here with three fearful wounds in his leg, inflicted by a lion which attempted to carry him off as he lay round a camp fire ten miles from here. I fear septic poisoning has set in as his temperature remains considerably above normal. So to-morrow morning I mean to give him chloroform and enlarge the wounds, so as to allow of thorough cleansing and free drainage.

" I bought a couple of monkeys some few days ago and during my absence from the station, a hyena came in the night and pulled the monkeys down from the tree where they lodged by means of the string to which they were tied, then at one bite the hyena took off one monkey's head. Poor number two cries frequently during the day for her lost mate, but we are good to her and she is getting over her loss."

(18*th July*, 1893.)

" You know about my being at work clearing the road to Kibwezi. I began some twenty odd miles from the

station and camped out with the men. Then before I got finished with this, there came a letter requesting me to take prompt action in surveying and charting the hundred miles of territory, which we are to have from the Company.

" I acted very promptly, since my instructions were to do so, and as I feel that the rights of the natives must be recognised, I was careful to travel over the entire district taking angles, calculating distances, fixing positions of villages and *shambas*, hills and springs. Of course this meant travelling through bush. I travelled light with a bit of pumpkin, or a sweet potato, and whatever meat I could secure with my gun for my food. Sometimes we trudged thirty miles a day, setting out at daybreak and never halting till we reached camp in the evening. I managed to get the work done, charts drawn out to scale, boundaries defined, and a copy of each sent to Mr. Bruce and the acting Administrator at Mombasa, all within say a fortnight. During my trip I felt in the best of trim.

" On reaching Kibwezi Station on a Saturday night about 8.30 or 9 p.m., the last two hours being through a very bad bit of jungle, strewn with lava boulders, I felt glad that my work seemed near its completion, but would you believe it, on the Tuesday morning a message came for me to go and see a man who had been bitten by a lion, ten miles from Kibwezi.

" A couple of days after this again, while I was busy at my charts, a message came from the German missionaries, forty miles from here, asking me to come and doctor a sick missionary who seemed to have come to Africa seeking health. He was far gone in phthisis pulmonalis.

" I worked hard at my charts, got them finished, wrote off page after page of correspondence, and then seeing the mail bag properly sealed, I set off on a forced march of forty miles.

" I knew it was too much, and felt sure that I should have to pay for it, but what could one do when humanity called for help ? We had a river over a hundred yards wide to cross on the way, then I had an adventure with an enormous snake.

" The poor fellow did not live long after my arrival. I had sent him the only bottle of port wine I had left, and on my arrival I saw that the disease had left him in a state of collapse.

" As quickly as possible I got hot bottles and hot stones laid about him in bed, then I got the wine and gave him a little sip every few minutes. He said, looking up in my face gratefully, ' *Sehr gut, sehr gut.*' But within two-and-a-half hours after my arrival, he had gone to where there is no more sorrow or death. After all was over I took a little food, then assisted at making the grave. Next day we had the funeral, many natives assisting. On the Monday, I retraced my way over the forty miles, a thousand thoughts and memories crowding in on me as I walked alone, ahead of my carriers. A day or two later, I had to lie down and rest feeling just done up. So I paid for my over exertion.

" However I'm now at Kibwezi and it will take a good deal of persuasion to draw me off into another bit of hurried travelling for some time to come.

" We are all well here and quite happy. Our influence with the natives is extending and deepening. Several times lately the elders of the district, some sixty or seventy in number, have come to see and talk with me.

Our last talk was held only a day or two ago. We had one man in the audience, an elder, on whom I operated under chloroform a few days before. His face positively beamed with pleasure, and his eyes were fixed on mine all the time our talk with the elders lasted.

" For hadn't I given him some wonderful medicine which made him sleep just like one dead ? Hadn't I made his face like his neighbours' by removing that tumour which affected his eye, shunted his nose to one side, depressed one side of his mouth, and bulged outwardly like a hen's egg ? The operation was all the talk of the district, and the poor fellow gave me a goat as a present (nearly as large as a donkey). Of course I gave him a present in return. He says that we are now strong friends, that he loves me very much. I operated through the fossa of the canine tooth, so that no scar is visible anywhere. The operation was trifling in itself but I feel so thankful for the influence it has had for good, I feel assured that a few such operations, and the ability to tell forth the story of God's redeeming love, would work a revolution here in a few years. I sometimes feel very sad indeed as I think that I can't speak the Kikamba tongue yet. We have lots of hard work before us, but, as Dr. Flett would say, ' If the work is hard and needs much patience and painstaking, it is work that will last, and its rewards will be great.'

" I sometimes feel as I speak with these elders that my youth is against me, I do look so boyish. If the Doctor were here with his beautiful silver crown, his every word would be heard with the utmost respect. He would be an Elder of the elders.

" We have to be all things and everything out here ; judge of all sorts of cases of theft, etc. ; preacher, doctor,

carpenter, navvy, gardener, book-keeper. As I write the cook comes in and asks me what is to be for dinner. I look at the ground, then at the ceiling, then all round the house, then into the cook's black face, and say: 'Soup' (made up from all sorts of vegetables plus a bit of meat), 'pancakes,' 'tea,' and so the cook marches off to furnish us with some fearfully and wonderfully made concoction.

"It is our mid-winter out here, the leaves are falling from the trees in showers. The green has a dried-up appearance, and the temp. at noon in the shade is about 70° Fahr. The mornings are very cold indeed for Africa."

CHAPTER X

MAN OF ALL WORK

These excursions which Dr. Charters made with only two or three attendants, meant that he had to rough it a good deal, so it is not to be wondered at that when he returned to the station he had to do battle with fever in his own person, and felt for a time as if his body were no part of himself, but something that he had to drag to duty with him. It was while in this condition that he received the news of the death of Sir William Mackinnon. About the same time also came the news of the death of Mr. David Dick, the trader, which had happened some time before.

During the months of July and August Dr. Charters was constantly at the station, taking an active part in all the work that was going on, and diligently acquiring a knowledge of the language and manners of the people around. From the 29th of August to the 9th September he left the routine of station life to pay another visit to Mr. George Wilson, and to consult with him about the completion of the road to the coast. At this time it seemed as if the road-making might be given up because of Sir William Mackinnon's death.

On the 26th of September a party of Government Officers under Colonel Colvile *en route* for Uganda arrived at Kibwezi. As one of the Officers (Captain Besant) was suffering from fever, and had been ill some

time, Dr. Charters was called on to report on the case. He reported unfavourably and Captain Besant was left at Kibwezi to receive medical care.

Eighteen days later another patient was brought to Kibwezi. This was Lieutenant Höhnel who had been up-country on an expedition, and had been seriously wounded in an encounter with a rhinoceros.

These patients having so far recovered as to be fit to be conveyed to Mombasa, and information having been received that a Mr. V. A. Hill and his wife were coming out to join the mission staff, Dr. Charters, on the 2nd November, set out to convey his patients to the Coast, and to meet Mr. and Mrs. Hill, and make their journey up-country as easy and agreeable as possible.

While at Mombasa he took the opportunity to arrange various matters of business between the Mission and the I.B.E.A. Coy.

(11*th August*, 1893.)

" It is so easy in Africa, where at times one does feel a bit listless and lazy, to do things by halves, to feel anything-will-do, and make stop-gap sort of work. Yet to those who know the results of such work, how it means settling down into a muddle and perpetual worry, the evils are greatly to be dreaded. Again I am conscious that all lasting work calls for patience and continued effort. The acquirement of two languages, Kiswahili and Kikamba is no small task, especially when one of them has to be learned entirely from the natives. Yet this task must be attempted and completed before we can be of great service in Ukambani. I am sanguine enough to expect that all we really attempt to do will be a great success. Why shouldn't we be successful,

with youth and energy and all that is essential on our side ? I remember how on the Congo I used occasionally to make my friend Biggs laugh by telling him that so-and-so and so-and-so, naming all the cut-throats and wicked characters about Stanley Pool, would one day be members of his church, and he their beloved pastor. Happy Biggs ! He is where there is no need of earthly pastors, and my dream of his future is lost in the thought of the glory where he is now. We don't seem to have the same wild reckless characters about Kibwezi that we had at Stanley Pool.

" I am perfectly conscious of increasing influence with the people around. For all and each I try to have a kind word when we meet, especially for the women, with whom are my deepest sympathies. A little word for baby, who in many cases shrieks with fear of the white man, but all the same the mother likes to see her little mite kindly handled and criticised. Our medical work, too, is increasing, and the little operation I recently performed on the face of that elder, seems to have been the talk of the country side. The Wakamba evidently think the ' Bwana Doctari,' as they call me, can do everything. Two or three serious cases have been sent to me. One of these, a poor fellow without a nose. I wish he'd come my way a couple of years ago, wouldn't I have been delighted to try and give him a new nose from his arm *à l'Italien ?*

" Sir William Mackinnon died on 22nd June last, and the news came by telegram to Mombasa on 23rd. By the up-mail also the Administrator sent it to me. Sir William wrote me a nice letter in May in which he mentioned that he was very ill and then on his way to London to see his doctor. So now Africa and the

B.E.A. Company, and the Mission at Kibwezi, have lost a good and true friend. For the past thirty years he has given liberally and toiled hard, in order that Africa might have the best and noblest gifts. The recent severe strain and constant anxiety, caused by the new Government not implementing the promises, or understandings, or engagements between the East Africa Company and the late Government, told heavily upon his health, which at best was never very good. I feel that I have lost a friend, who always treated me with the utmost courtesy and kindness.

"I have written a letter of sympathy to Lady Mackinnon in the name of the staff, and offered to write frequently to her about our work if it is her wish.

"It is a curious position that I occupy at Kibwezi, Jack of all trades and professions high and low, Missionary and Judge, Friend and Master, Father and Mother to the men and boys under our care. Only this afternoon I had for decency's sake, to take a couple of shirts and rig out two little fellows about twelve years of age. These little chaps hail from near Lake Victoria Nyanza, they say all their relatives are dead and that the constant fear of having a spear thrown at them by their countrymen, induced them to follow up the caravan of the Railway Survey Party. By this means, after actually travelling with the survey to Uganda, they came to Kibwezi where one of them began to be ill, and the other elected to stay with him. They look odd sort of creatures and would have looked still more odd if I hadn't cut the sleeves of the shirts very short and hemmed them so that their forearms are free. This afternoon I gave my boy his first lesson in darning socks, and if he didn't, or couldn't, make a better

job of them than his master, well, he ain't much worth.

" I have written to Mrs. Bruce (Agnes Livingstone), and asked her if she couldn't induce some of her young lady friends to send us a number of cheaply got up blouses for boys of twelve to fourteen. I wonder if she'll think me cheeky for begging. Oh, for the deft fingers of some kind-hearted young lady just for a week or so !

" A number of fine-looking horses passed through Kibwezi a few days ago *en route* to Ugandi. Also the second part of a Government caravan of over five hundred men, Major Smith in command. From what we hear, there seems to be no room for doubt as to the railway being begun next year. Of course any of Sir Gerald Portal's staff whom we have seen returning to the coast are very reticent as to the nature of his report. We don't ask or hint now as to what its nature will be. Sir Gerald himself, we expect, will be with us in a few weeks.

" I have got a good lamp, which lights all the dining-room, and when we sit down to dinner we look ever so bright and comfortable. I have also a fine bullock ready, and lots of champagne in the store for Sir Gerald's arrival. When I have guests, I always have Watson in to dinner so that all the white men form a happy party. Paterson the gardener boards with me.

" I am also expecting by December some three to six other milk cows, so that we may possibly go in for making our own butter and cheese."

(*15th August*, 1893.)

" The down mail from Uganda is due to-day, but

instead of its arrival, we had the up mail an hour ago, the latter five days before its time. I cannot tell you how thrilled with pleasure I was when I saw your familiar hand on one of the letters. A kind of subdued sadness has been hanging over me since I learned of Mackinnon's death. The thought of how the old folks, who once made my boyish life so bright, are slipping away one by one comes into my mind very often. It is quite true what the papers say about Sir William being gentle and winning, yet resolute and determined. I was conscious of these qualities as I spoke with him. He seemed to like me, and I shall miss him and his kindly welcome if ever I see London again.

"The letter you kindly sent on to me was from the mother of the young schoolmaster who sailed with me to Congo, and whom we buried three weeks after our landing. The poor mother's heart still grieves and she seems to find a comfort in writing to me.

"The most atrocious rendering of both hymn and tune that ever I knew, was that which obtained among the Americans who came with Bishop Taylor to the Congo. They were good well-meaning men, these American Christian Colonists, yet they made some of our most sacred and sweetest hymns go to choruses and tunes that savoured of the public dancing-saloon rather than the Church of God. Such a state of matters of course wouldn't be tolerated by you or your people, yet poor unthinking mortals are ready to sing any rubbish that the printer or compiler may place in their hands. Please keep one of your new Hymn books, first edition, and with music, for me, will you? I shall slip into your Church in High Street some Sunday in the

future, and worship with you, and then after the Service hunt you up.

" We expect Sir Gerald Portal here in a fortnight or so from now. Possibly I may accompany him for three marches to the coast, if he has no objection, and would wish my company. Colonel Rhodes (chief of staff) will be with him. The latter is a brother of Cecil Rhodes and knows all about the Soudan Campaign. He was with the Gordon Relief Force.

" Of course we daren't ask questions as to the nature of Sir Gerald's report on Uganda, but from pretty reliable sources, I think we can gather that both retention of Uganda and the railway are to be advocated.

" At any rate it is absolutely true that in the meantime our hold on Uganda is stronger than ever, and the additional force of five hundred men and loads that passed through our station lately *en route* to Uganda mean something permanent surely."

(10*th September*, 1893.)

" I have just got back to Kibwezi after a fifty-six mile walk and thoroughly enjoyed the return march. A pleasing contrast to the down march, when a pair of elastic sides, which are altogether unsuitable for travelling in this country, quite took away all pleasure from the journey. On my way back to Kibwezi, I met a Mr. Gedge, Correspondent for *The Times*. He told me that Sir Gerald Portal had definitely decided to return to the coast by the River Tana. He (Gedge) had parted with him at Kikuyu, only one hundred and fifty miles from Kibwezi. It seems, from all that I could gather, that the Uganda Commissioner has had a very intricate and complex piece of work to do. Captain Lugard

comes in for a good deal of hard hitting in the Commissioner's report, his actions are in many cases judged as altogether foolish and unwise.

"I remember when discussing Uganda affairs with Dr. Flett, at a time when Lugard's reports were before the British public, Dr. Flett thought that Lugard had done admirably, so did I, but at the same time I said that had Stanley's master hand been on the spot, there would not have been the same trouble. When Captain Lugard left his work in Uganda and struck across to Kavallis, on the shores of Lake Albert Nyanza, he found some 8,000 Soudanese refugees from Emin Pasha's province. A big rabble, comprised of the rag-tag and bob-tail of the Soudan, with little discipline among them. This rabble was nominally commanded by a Selim Bey, previously Colonel of one of Emin's regiments.

"Stanley, while at Kavallis in 1888, had seen the utter hopelessness of doing anything with these people just then. Emin, their supposed pasha, had no ability as a governor and no authority over them. They had had their own way for years, plundering and pillaging as they wished. You may remember how latterly Stanley had to take them in hand with maxim gun and loaded rifles ready to help them to realise that they had no Emin Pasha to deal with. Captain Lugard meets these people, invites them to follow him, promises them a great deal, pledging himself to see these promises fulfilled as a British Officer and a gentleman. The mob accordingly bundles up and follows him into Unyoro. On reaching Unyoro, the Captain begins to realise matters. He has only 1,000 fighting men in the 8,000, the other 7,000 souls being children, women, sick and

useless. The few marches to Unyoro have shown him something of the Soudanese and their propensities, besides warning him of the danger of introducing such elements into Uganda, a country just then in a ferment through Mahommedan, French Priest, and unwise Missionary intrigue. Accordingly Captain Lugard determines to drop the Soudanese rabble in Unyoro, and does so by establishing a line of stockades extending in a line north and south. The stockades are built, and did they serve as a means of checking the slave trade and promoting peace and prosperity ? Just the reverse, as the natives of Unyoro can tell. The newcomers simply helped themselves to whatever food or cattle the country possessed, using their rifles when necessary, to enforce such helping. The result being of course that the natives now trust no one.

" Quite recently Sir Gerald Portal, as you may know, after having left Uganda, had to return, as the Mahommedans had broken out, and openly declared war against the British. On investigation it was found that the Soudanese leader, Selim Bey, was behind the scenes, inciting the rebellion, nay more, had actually arranged a plot by which the few British officers and their men were to be suddenly exterminated. Fortunately however Captain Macdonald, R.E. (of the Railway Survey), a shrewd and able officer, in command in Uganda, discovered the plot and anticipated matters by beginning a fight with the new combination of Mahommedans, and took Selim Bey prisoner. About one hundred Mahommedans were killed. Again and again Selim Bey declared that Captain Lugard had lured him to Uganda under false pretences, that he had been promised a good post, and that in fact Lugard had

ruined him. A court-martial sat on Selim Bey, and military execution was almost carried, but finally it was decided to take him prisoner to the coast.

"Fortunately as it happened for all concerned, Selim Bey, who seemed to have been a big corpulent Soudanese, in rather a bad condition of body, died on the way. The native Mahommedan Chief, whom I saw with Gedge, is also going to the coast as a sort of prisoner.

"I am afraid that the Uganda muddle, if thoroughly investigated, would lead to so much mud-throwing all round, that it is likely Lord Rosebery in his wisdom will let the controversy drop, and for strategical reasons, quietly go on with the railway and development of the country.

"It is very easy for us at Kibwezi to sit and judge of Uganda affairs, yet it must have been a most anxious and trying time for Captain Lugard, when in Uganda, with his few untried men and unknown numbers of enemies around him.

"On every hand we are assured that the railway will be begun next year, and even now, the reliefs for the officers at present in Uganda are daily expected at Mombasa. Won't it be fine, when we have the railway running past our station, and can get whatever we want from home on short notice. Then with our fine garden and fruits, our lovely walks and hedges, and a good modern brick house (not yet built) we shall be in a veritable African paradise."

(*17th September*, 1893.)

"I fully agree with you that there's no place like Bonnie Scotland, its beauties are unique and unrivalled,

its people are the best I know, and the memories of friends and happy days, throw a warmth round even the thought of our little island. Yet you will agree with me that other beauties, not to speak of other loves, or duties, or privileges, which we meet and experience through travelling in other parts of Our Father's World, help us to appreciate His nature and wisdom and love all the better. Often, often in Africa, in the silence of the forest, or the stillness of the plain, a curious desire to bend the knee in reverent worship has come over me, and on more than one occasion, while marching, some magnificent view of hill and plain and sunshine, has preached to me and sung to me that the cattle on a thousand hills are His. Also away from friends we much love, God's presence and influence around us becomes very real, and daily we are reminded in a thousand ways of His lovingkindness.

" You speak of ' my rushing about here and there at road-work ' and ask if it wouldn't have been wiser to begin the clearing of the road from the station end. Well, your observation of the road, and the wisdom of beginning from a good base, is practical and soldier-like, but my real reason for beginning at the far end was to allow of my seeing the work well begun, and after a few days returning to the station. I knew that as the men got nearer to Kibwezi, they would work all the harder.

" As for my rushing about and forgetting to take care of myself, you are quite right. I felt so well and happy in my work and the climate seemed so favourable and not at all relaxing, that I really allowed myself to undergo unnecessary privations and hardships, and never dreamt of sparing myself in anything. This

seemed all very good for a time, but my punishment came at last.

" In my anxiety to have a neat curve in the channel of the stream, and knowing the inability of the native to make it, I worked away for over eight hours in the stream. My assistant was one native, and between us, standing knee-deep in the water, all these hours, we handled say about one hundred boulders of lava rock and laid, say forty to fifty yards of lining, for the stream. It was a serious and fool-hardy indiscretion on my part, and I paid heavily for it a few days later, when a mild fever followed.

" I was laid up for two and half days and then mended, and resolved to be wiser in the future. Dr. Fraser knows what the prolonged effect of cold water is on the blood, and, while standing in the stream, a presentiment that some of the symptoms of blood-destruction from (cold water) chill would appear did occur to me.

" With the exception of these two and a half days, I have enjoyed excellent health, and the longer I live here the more I am convinced of the healthiness of the place. So you will see from the foregoing that but for my indiscretion, I could have presented a clean bill of health, not even a headache. Doesn't that speak well for Kibwezi ? "

(*September*, 1893.)

" I can only thank you for your kindness in suggesting to go and see mother, and I am sure she will be pleased to see you. If you could indicate when you would be likely to call, you would be sure to get her at home. She sometimes feels lonely I believe, and if well enough,

just slips out for a short walk to muse and think. Don't stand on ceremony, for mother is a plain 'buddy,' you know. Ask her to make you a cup of tea and a bit of toast. You will find her very diffident in speaking about me. She has no visitors or at least very few.

" You ask me to tell you what papers I get, and offer kindly to send me something in the paper line. Well, I will just let you have your way, though I don't deserve such consideration. I get the *Weekly Scotsman*, the *Christian Leader*, the *Ceylon Independent*, and sometimes an odd *Glasgow Herald* or *Scotsman* from Mr. Bruce or Dr. Stewart.

" My own people send me cuttings every month from newspapers, especially cuttings on Africa and ship-building. We pay no extra postage to Kibwezi, though up till lately we had two mail runners who joined the mail caravan of fifteen men that carried the mail from Mombasa into the interior. These mail runners go at an average of twenty miles per day, some days however doing over thirty miles.

" Some time in April our rains cease, and we have our winter or dry season, the temperature getting lower and lower, and then again increasing till about 20th September, when the sun crossing the equator on its way South changes the aspect of matters and we have rains again, beginning in October or November, and continuing right on almost daily till March or April. The rain showers are short and heavy, and as much as thirty inches of rain may fall in a month.

" Just now the country is all dried up and bleached ; in some places nothing but burnt grass or ashes for miles around. In such circumstances the bees have little material from which to collect the honey, but as

soon as the rains begin, the whole country in a few weeks (almost days) rushes up into flower and then the bees are busy and honey is plentiful.

" As for our garden, the little 6 ft. wide crystal stream runs through it, both banks being lined with stones (lava boulders) and clay. We have pineapples, dates, oranges, papayas, vines, cabbage, lettuce, celery, peas, beans, cauliflower, carrots, turnips, rice, sweet potatoes, English potatoes, coffee, tea, broccoli, tomatoes, bananas, asparagus, marigolds, sunflowers, all growing and nearly all doing well. The cauliflower and carrots do even better than at home.

" I have also arranged to purchase some more milk cows from Usoga (near Uganda) and a big house or byre will soon be completed and ready for them.

" Just now we have about fifteen head of cattle, six bullocks being trained to work the plough and be useful otherwise.

" The gardener (Mr. Paterson) and myself work very hard, the former especially so. He is a good fellow and I like him very much. By thinking out a matter well before deciding on it, I have managed thus far to get real solid lasting work done and not a murmur of dissent or a single sharp word, has been heard or uttered. This is a great deal, I consider, and a most important matter in connection with a mission station. We expect an addition to the industrial side of our working staff next month in the shape of a carpenter. When he arrives I will give myself exclusively to Medical and linguistic work. We have two languages to acquire, Kiswahili and Kikamba, the latter as yet unwritten and to be reduced to alphabetical form. When once we can preach in Kikamba, it will be such a pleasure.

" By the time this reaches you Sir Gerald Portal will be at home and his report will be under consideration. A great deal of secrecy as to his report has been maintained all along. We out here await with deep interest the final decision of Government.

" The goats here are in many cases enormous animals —the cows have a hunch on their backs, while the sheep have great heavy tails of solid fat.

" Just now we have lovely skies, the azure blue showing behind clouds of absolute whiteness. In the shade the temperature is very moderate ; and all around nature seems very pretty, in spite even of dried up grass.

" On the morning of the 26th September, I was sitting writing up some accounts, while a soldering iron was being heated in the kitchen fire, when suddenly a horse's head appeared at the garden door of my house.

" I was dressed in a serge suit and didn't look particularly clean from the smoke and grime of the soldering process. Rushing out I found a pleasant-looking elderly, military man on the horse's back. He briefly introduced himself and asked me where he might camp. I escorted him to our best camp near the fountain, and then invited him to come and have a cup of tea. On my return to the house I met a Captain Gibb (a Largs man I believe) also on horseback, and requested him to come with the Colonel. After a bit, my two guests appeared, then I learned that they had three hundred men, and that other two officers were coming on behind, one of them very sick from sun fever.

" Presently tea was ready, and a few eggs and some bread.

" A plateful of lovely tomatoes, as yellow as gold and as large as oranges and as sweet as plums, graced the

table. The two officers were loud in their praise of the tomatoes, and I said that I believed the Leeds men would be pleased to have a photo of that plateful. Captain Gibb, who was a jocular, rough and ready sort of fellow, reached over for his sixth or eighth tomato and said casually : 'They won't see a photo of this one anyway.'

" I did what I could for our new guests, had a good dinner in the evening, to which eight white men sat down, and I attended to the sick man, Captain Besant. During the next two days I looked after all the sick men of the expedition. Numbers of them had blistered feet and pleuritic stitches, so I induced the Colonel to wait over the third day, and after a course of mustard plasters all round, the caravan, with the exception of one officer and four men, was able to leave here this morning in first class condition. The officer left behind is a Captain Besant (of the Norfolk regiment). He has seen considerable service in the Soudan and Egypt, but he has suffered on more than one occasion from heat or heat apoplexy, and as he exposed himself to the sun rather thoughtlessly when half way to Kibwezi, he got another touch not unlike threatened sunstroke and had to be carried in a hammock to Kibwezi.

" Of course he could not go on, and Colonel Colvile asked me to attend him, and at the same time pressed me in a quiet yet forcible way to give an opinion as to the probability of the Captain's health in future allowing of his being available for efficient service in Uganda. My prognosis was unfavourable, and I put my report in writing. So as soon as Captain Besant mends, he is to proceed to the coast and report himself to the Consul-General at Zanzibar, and then if a medical board care

to send him back he can return. Personally I could not, with a clear conscience, give my consent to his going to Uganda as he is constitutionally unfitted. He is very sore about being left behind, and fully expects to return in a few months, but he has first to recover from his present illness, and then, if in face of the report which Colonel Colvile has asked me to send to the Consul-General, the medical board pass him, it has nothing to do with me.

" Colonel Colvile (of the Grenadier Guards) who has had some eight years' Soudanese and Egyptian experience, told little incidents of his campaigns and travels which interested me very much. He says he detests the French character, and last night was talking over the Revolution and the present ill-feeling of France towards us—evinced notably in Egyptian and Colonial affairs, and particularly on the occasion of General Gordon's death and the fall of Khartoum when rejoicings were held in Paris.

" I told the Captain that I had no great love for the Russians, whose war history of the past century I have very closely studied.

" Thus the evenings wear themselves in and we retire to rest till daybreak, when porridge and milk remind us of the human side of life.

" As soon as Colonel Colvile and party reach Uganda we shall have Major Macdonald and a number of other officers at present in Uganda, leaving there for Home, and probably they will reach Kibwezi about the New Year's time."

CHAPTER XI

IN MOMBASA AGAIN

(*5th October*, 1893.)

"Our summer is just at its height, the past day or two being the hottest we have had at Kibwezi. Fortunately the houses are delightfully cool and airy, and we arrange to be indoors from twelve till two, the hours when the sun is very strong. Our work here goes on pretty much as usual. The school, I am sorry to say, in spite of the unremitting attention of Mr. Watson, is far from a success. The children don't like even the two hours restraint and gladly avail themselves of any little pretext for not attending. It is quite evident that the parents have no idea as yet of the value of education, and in their eyes, a bit of cloth or a few beads count as the prizes of life. In a conversation which I had some time ago with the elders around Kibwezi, I was pressing them with arguments and reasons why they should join me in making a model town with good houses, arranged in rows, with gardens and good roads, when their spokesman rather amused me by saying in a very calm and matter-of-fact way: 'We are such a democratic people that no man has any authority over his neighbour, and every man just does what pleases him best.'

"Isn't that a very happy state of affairs? And in this lies the explanation of little dirty villages of three

or four huts, each hut containing no means of ventilation, and affording a shelter for goats, hens, men, women and children.

" Quite recently I sat in one of these huts for a few minutes, but the heat and smoke from the fire were simply unbearable.

" Of late some four or more families have come and, without permission, settled on the Mission estate only some four hundred yards from our own houses. As these families were increasing, and the general arrangement of their villages was not at all commendable, I had a friendly chat with the lot one day, and offered them their choice of either putting things into decent order and paying, each one goat per three months as rent, or removing to the boundary of the Mission territory. I am informed that they think the rent exorbitant, so they mean to go. Just fancy four goats per annum as the rental for a village ! If that fact was published in Paisley, we should have quite an exodus towards Kibwezi, wouldn't we ? In spite of the strong sun at mid-day the mornings and evenings are delightfully cool and bracing.

(*In Camp :* 80 *miles from Kibwezi. 8th November,* 1893.)

" You will see from the above that I am once more on the march. I am now going to Mombasa on the coast to meet a lady and gentleman who are to arrive on the 10th December, in order to escort them to Kibwezi. The march, as you know, will be four hundred miles (two hundred miles each way) and my only reason for going out this time is to see that the lady is comfortably looked after, and that her husband is not worried too

much by the Swahili porters who are not always good to the European who can't speak their language. Of course the lady will be carried in a hammock (by four men) all the way if she likes. Then we will each have a separate tent and I will do my very best to make the long journey pleasant. When we reach Kibwezi we shall show our new friends into a good three-roomed house, with outhouses, and a garden, and they will have this place entirely to themselves.

" Well, then, here we are on the march. Yesterday we marched sixteen miles and then got into a pretty camp. When I say we, I mean not only myself and the porters, but also Captain Besant, who is now almost well after his long illness, and an Austrian Naval officer named Lieutenant Höhnel who was badly wounded by a rhinoceros, and on whom I had to operate. Both officers are carried in hammocks and I trudge along by their side. We have also a little dog and four pups, and a monkey riding a donkey, besides other curious sights in our caravan of about fifty men.

" I got first into camp and set my cook to making tea ready for the Europeans. In camp we found a little grass hut and close beside it a dead donkey. A few yards from camp was another donkey quietly munching the sweet young grass. These poor animals had had sore backs, and had been left behind by some Arab traders, who show neither care nor mercy for their beasts.

" After a good luncheon, I sent one man to plant our flag on the road so that should the mail carriers pass in the night, they would bring my letters. It was well that I had done so, for about 8 p.m. when all around was quite dark, we heard a shot, then another shot to which

we replied, and ten minutes later the mail bags were deposited at my feet.

" About 10 p.m. I turned into my tent and lay down to read till I was quite sleepy. Then this morning we came on to this place, such a lovely place, and I am now in my tent, scribbling on my knee, my table being used for lunch and dinner.

" 72° Fahr. in the shade at home means a much more oppressive heat than 80° in Africa. Here the air is generally so dry and clear that even 80° does not seem at all oppressive.

" As soon as we return to Kibwezi, I hope to devote nearly all my time to linguistic work and especially to the language Kikamba and Masai, the language of the great cattle-stealing tribe, who keep East Africa in such a state of unrest.

" It was indeed with deep sorrow that I learnt of Surgeon Parke's death in Scotland. He and Captain Stairs were two of the gentlest and best of Stanley's officers. It is curious how these fine young fellows, so restless and active, are nipped off one by one, when many old and apparently useless ones linger on, year after year.

" You know all about Uganda affairs from the newspapers, which I know you must read when you have leisure. We expect to meet a big caravan from Uganda in a day or two from now.

" In ten years from now we shall have a British Army, in co-operation with another British Army acting from Egypt, advancing on Khartoum *viâ* Uganda. The first step towards this I think has already been taken in the sending to Uganda of Colonel Colvile with three British officers to drill the troops in Uganda.

" We had a very pleasant journey to the coast, but on the day we got into Mombasa we had a frightful downpour of rain, and my two patients, now almost well, thinking they would enter Mombasa on their feet, discarded their hammocks and set off with me to walk to the steam launch, which we had arranged should be waiting for us. Presently we came to a rushing stream, over five feet deep and through this all three of us had to walk. I didn't mind the soaking a bit and plunged into the stream first, and then waited on the other side to help my friends up the bank. Poor Lieutenant Höhnel's face was distorted with the pain of his wound, and my heart bled for him. As soon as we got across, I divested myself of trousers, and using my long waterproof coat to cover me, I pushed on ahead so as to reach the steam launch and prevent the man in charge from going away without us, especially as we were more than an hour late.

" On reaching the launch I found a Mr. Younger (son of Younger of Benmore and some relation of the Orkney Younger), in charge, and as a missionary in a waterproof coat and minus trousers excited remarks, I had some diffidence in boarding the launch.

" However I braced myself up and after a wash in the creek and a slight refreshment, I donned my soaking clothing and sat down and talked. It was a relief to see all safe on board.

" We have in Mombasa some splendid fellows, amongst them a Mr. Jenner, son of Sir William Jenner. The Church Missionary Society have a strong mission here and quite a number of ladies. There are twelve in and about Mombasa, and some seven or eight are expected in a few days from home.

" The other afternoon the Administrator and myself had tea with no less than four maiden ladies. The Administrator is marrying one of them, the eldest of three sisters, and all of them in Mombasa.

" We have our own newly married couple coming to Kibwezi and they should arrive here somewhere about the 12th or 14th December.

" So you see we are getting quite civilised and the presence of a lady makes all the young and old men wake up to be more careful in the matter of dress.

" This second visit to Mombasa enables me to compare up-country with the coast. Mombasa is said to be very healthy and it undoubtedly is so, but it is much closer and warmer than Kibwezi and slightly enervating. Kibwezi is very cool, almost cold at times, compared with this, and we have the advantage of plenty of European vegetables.

" I wish we had the Railway, and many friends coming to see us, they would greatly enjoy the trip, especially at this time of year when all around is so green and beautiful.

" H.M.S. *Swallow* came into Mombasa Harbour to join H.M.S. *Racoon*, also lying in harbour. The officers of both these ships seemed very nice fellows and I had the pleasure of lunching or dining with them on board several times.

" One day at lunch on the *Swallow*, the 1st Lieutenant and the Doctor asked me if I would preach on board ship on the Sunday. I thought they were half joking, but as I went off the ship they again asked me, and seeing they were in earnest I said yes.

" They went to the Captain, who, although he had

evidently some ideas of his own in regard to Church Services, said he would like to consider the matter.

"He turned up the 'Queen's Regulations' and Chambers's Encyclopædia, to see what 'Baptist' meant. He went through 'Nonconformist' in the same way, and at last, as he had been born and bred in the Church, he managed to bring his mind to believe that it was against the regulations for a Nonconformist to officiate on board ship.

"The 1st Lieutenant, whose father was Admiral Wake, knew better, and had some animated discussion on the subject with the Captain, and wrote me a letter letting me know the details.

"I went to lunch that same Sunday at noon, and found the two officers quietly indignant over the Captain's bigotry, but as it isn't right to encourage disloyal feeling towards a superior, I begged them not to speak of the matter.

"One good thing came of it, for the Captain instead of conducting Service himself that morning, asked the clergyman in Mombasa to do so. He is one of the best and most earnest missionaries I know, but unfortunately he has given all his time and attention to native languages and native services. He came to me on the Saturday evening and in the kindest manner asked me to preach the sermon for him, but knowing of the Captain's anxieties on the subject I declined.

"Last Friday I went to an Arab marriage. The bridegroom and his relatives and all the guests, sat at the door of the house while Turkish delight and sweets were passed round among them. Our heads were sprinkled with some fragrant material, and we had a cup of delicious coffee; then our handkerchiefs were

scented for us. Meanwhile the bride remained in the house and a number of other ladies, relatives and friends, kept up a perpetual screaming like a lot of young hyenas.

" Yesterday (Sunday) I preached at the English Service in Mombasa. There were, say, twenty men and eight ladies present, all in spotless white clothes. I felt a sort of odd man, for my white clothes through washing in pools by the wayside, were not white but yellow, and my shirt was a red flannel one. However good Mr. Taylor, the Missionary clergyman, covered all my rags with a surplice.

" The new couple for Kibwezi, Mr. and Mrs. Hill, from Pollokshields, are now in Mombasa. In a few days we hope to leave here with about twenty men for Kibwezi.

" Two bicycles have been sent out, and we hear that Peter Mackinnon has taken his good old Uncle's place. The Mission I suppose will be called the Mackinnon Memorial Mission.

" There is also some talk of our getting some sixty Galla boys sent to us to train up as artizans and Christians. These boys were captured on a slave dhow in the Red Sea, some two or three years ago and taken on to Lovedale, South Africa, and now they may be sent to us, as the Galla country is to the north of us.

" I am beginning to realise the responsibilities which will come with European ladies and a large number of children, not to speak of increased staff at Kibwezi, and how I am to superintend ladies' work or anything in that line is more than I can say."

(*Mombasa*, 18*th December*, 1893.)

" Your very welcome letters of 15th October reached

me about three weeks ago. Really it is kind of you to think of asking some of the young ladies to make some blouses for me. Mrs. Bruce has sent out a few and they will be very useful. But I don't like the idea of diverting your interests from the Baptist Missions, or taking away what might have gone to them."

CHAPTER XII

INCREASING DIFFICULTIES

(21*st January*, 1894.)

"At length we got away from Mombasa and, on the last Sunday of the year, we broke up camp and left Banderini for the interior. I found that we were a few men short, as some hadn't turned up, and as I was very anxious to get on I sent Mr. Hill and his wife to the Church of England Mission Station at Rabai to request the assistance of a few men for two days. The Missionary there got us four men for the time being. In this way we reached the second camping place.

"I had taken with me some seventy pounds of shark, which I meant as a kind of Christmas treat for the men. So on reaching camp No. 2, I made them fall into line while I told them that during the journey I meant to be kind to them, but at the same time, I should be very strict in dealing with any troublesome or lazy fellows. They unanimously shouted approval of my words, and the next day on reaching camp I administered a slight punishment to two men who had loafed about, and only came into camp towards 5 p.m.; and then the shark was divided and distributed all round, causing all hearts to rejoice. From this day onwards all through the journey we got on splendidly together. At our third camping place I bought a sackful of young pineapple plants at a cost of eight annas (equal to about ninepence),

and these, together with some ninety vine cuttings and mango seeds, I meant to enrich our garden at Kibwezi. You would have laughed had you seen the curiosity of the native women at this place in regard to Mrs. Hill. But as yet no liberties were permitted, and I didn't feel wicked enough to prompt the women to pull Mrs. Hill's hair by way of accurately ascertaining if it was real hair and not simply stuck on. At our fourth camp we found the water in curiously shaped cauldron-like holes in the rocks. Possibly vegetable action aided later by a stone whirling round and round in the rush of the heavy rain-falls, had caused these cauldrons to form. Many of them were six to eight feet deep, and the same in diameter. The geological formation of the country about this place, known as the Taro desert, though it is as fertile and green as could well be, is very perplexing to most travellers.

" Next day we came to pools of water about 10 a.m., but as we had before us some twenty-two miles without water, I decided to breakfast and rest till the afternoon, and then go on for another seven or eight miles before camping. This necessitated a special effort on the part of the men, but they saw the case demanded it.

" A special effort, by the way, is a very good thing at home, but out here it does mean something very special, as one finds to one's cost, especially if house boy and cook combine to make a special effort. Generally afterwards, and immediately after, too, you find in the morning that trousers and socks and shirt have all been safely deposited nobody knows where, and you have to sit patiently in your nightgown on the side of your camp bed, till after rummaging here and there, the boy remembers where he stowed away the things you so

carefully laid aside the night before. Then after you are dressed and comforted, and sit down to early breakfast, the second part of the special effort is apparent in the shape of some fearfully and wonderfully made dishes, which you had better eat without being too anxious as to what they contain. Special efforts in Africa, prompted no doubt by the kindliest feelings towards you on the part of boy and cook, how much they are to be feared and dreaded !

" On the last day of the year, we camped among the hills, yet on the edge of a magnificent plain. About 6.30 a.m., on New Year's morning, I left camp and in less than an hour afterwards I had a zebra lying at my feet. The skin of this animal is very pretty indeed, but I was sorry that some of our men, being strict Mahommedans, wouldn't touch the meat, as it had not been killed in their peculiar way.

" After resting all the New Year's Day, we went on to the River Voi, where we crossed the only swamp between the coast and Kibwezi. It was difficult to think of Africa's sunny fountains, while you were up to the neck in the water, not over clean in parts. Having got through the swamp after fully half-an-hour's struggling, we went ahead for a mile and camped. Now I had promised, in the interests of the Road Construction Agent, to take a look at the swamp and see if there was no possibility of our making a good crossing a little lower down. Accordingly, in fulfilment of my promise, I started off the same afternoon with a few men and tried to penetrate the dense bush on the left bank of the River, but after over an hour's attempt, I gave it up and returned to camp. But my better nature prevailed and throwing off my only shirt, I started off again with

six armed men, and then *in puris naturalibus* recrossed the swamp, then re-dressed and went down the right bank for about three-quarters of a mile, when to my intense joy, I came on a likely-looking place where I found four well-cut narrow channels with high firm banks perfectly dry. These are now being bridged for waggons. Feeling like the workman who has honestly earned the pay in his pocket, I turned to the men with me, some of whom pretended to know all about the place, and asked if there was any water or swamp ahead, and as they assured me that there was none, I made a bee-line for camp. Scarcely had we gone a hundred yards further when I found water, water, everywhere. Darkness was just upon us and we couldn't go back. Tall reeds like cane towered on all sides of us, and these we had to crush down, so that we could walk over or through them as we went. At one place we came on the lair of some lion or hyena, with bones all around. At length pitch darkness set in, mist rose, and then down came the rain. For a time the dark outlines of the hill from which I took my bearings was completely hidden, and then it appeared and disappeared in the mists. Sometimes we made one step in four minutes, and now and then we came to a deadlock, and had to turn back a few yards. At length I suggested taking to the channel of one of the streams, and a few minutes later in single file we passed slowly, very slowly, up the stream. I felt sure that a severe fever would follow on my being lost, as again and again the cold rain-drops passed through my jacket to the skin, causing me to shiver like one in ague. After nearly two hours of this excitement, I thought we might fire two guns at once to attract the attention of our camp, and to our joy we

found they answered us. But though we struggled, now dry, now ankle deep, now neck deep, through the swamp, it was fully 10 p.m. before we saw our camp fires. We did look beauties. The poor men were all more or less scratched and bleeding, while I had one ugly scratch on the face, and my poor shins did smart. A change of dress and my dry shirt soon made me feel better. Then we had dinner together, and after that I sat down in my tent and made a rough chart of what I had found, and sent it back next day to the man in charge of road construction. I did feel sort of sleepy and shabby next morning, but no evil results followed as far as I know, and the satisfaction is now mine of knowing that the next caravan that comes inland may pass, even in the wet season, dry shod over the swamp.

" The remainder of our journey was comparatively uninteresting, save for the fact that again and again the remains of the zebra would somehow or other get into one or other of our tents, causing us to institute a searching examination, and get the high-smelling substance consigned to its legitimate owner. Long after all the meat had been eaten, the ligamentum Nuchæ was still in evidence, one of our Wakamba having asked me to let him have this to make his bow-strings.

" We met Major Smith returning from Uganda with his five hundred men and a great pile of ivory. Two of the biggest tusks, weighing over 140 lbs. each, were intended as a present for the Duke of York (H.M. the King).

" On reaching Kibwezi we found everything just at its loveliest. Major Smith can't help thinking about our beautiful garden ; he says we have the finest station in British East Africa, and I believe with no little

pride that he only says what is true. We have now some hundreds of young orange plants, hundreds of papayas, our vine cuttings are doing well, and soon will demand a vinery, the black currants are striking root.

" Mr. and Mrs. Hill have gone into their own three-roomed house and are highly delighted with the place and its appearances.

" This year we hope to try and run up a brick store and a few houses also of burnt bricks.

" But the loss, first of Sir William Mackinnon, and now of Mr. A. L. Bruce, may mean more to us than we know at present. A cablegram sent on to me a few days ago, assured me that the Committee at home will keep up their interest in the Mission. I know that all is right and well, but the loss of Mr. Bruce does indeed make me very sad. I had learned to love him for his kindliness and goodness, and I am sure that Agnes Livingstone, his wife, will bear her sorrow bravely, yet in a keen and deep sense that only God Himself can know.

" The death of Mr. Bruce makes the prospect of our Mission being transferred to some Church or Society, and the probability of the aims and objects of the Mission being altered and modified possible.

" By last mail I sent off to Mr. Peter Mackinnon a complete synopsis of the business affairs of the Mission, and by this mail I am sending a long letter for the perusal of our Home Committee, giving my opinions on the future prospects of the Mission. Hitherto we have simply been laying a solid foundation for future work, and that, too, under some disadvantages, for we have been without a carpenter since my arrival at Kibwezi. A survey of the district confirms my supposition that we have only some 500–600 souls within a radius of five

miles of us, a mongrel people speaking a mongrel language at that. Of course it was intended and believed by the founders of the Mission that Kibwezi should be a centre of civilisation and light, not only for the people near at hand, but also for the numerous settlers from all parts of East Africa whom it was hoped would in time be induced to take up their residence near us and near the railway line.

" There can be no doubt but that Kibwezi might, and I hope may, even yet, fulfil what was intended in its scope and aims, but at present appearances are against such fulfilment, and I fear that it will be some considerable time before we can hope for any development. Then the transfer of the Mission may also cause such modifications in what was intended, that we shall practically become a simple Evangelistic Mission.

" My faith in the glorious Old Gospel and its power to rouse men up is as strong as ever, but I should like to see some auxiliary aids, besides preaching and teaching, at work. A native who is a Christian may yet remain something of a loafer about his harem or village. A native who has healthy manly occupation to take up his time and keep the devil out of him, is, if a Christian, by so much the better man. I want therefore to see the natives taught carpentry and gardening.

" I am telling our Committee just what I think of Kibwezi. I wish our Mission were either one thing or the other, either an all-round Religious, Medical, Industrial and Educational Mission, or a simple Evangelistic Mission. One man and his wife, or two single men, could easily work the parish of 600 souls. In this case one house and garden would be all the necessary upkeep in the way of Station.

" Mr. Watson means to go home in a few months, if our Committee doesn't sanction the opening of a sub-station amongst the larger population within easy reach of us. I think Watson has a good deal of right in deciding as he has done, and I have told the Committee so already.

" He has worked very loyally and cheerfully with me all along, but he has not enjoyed the best of health. I think perhaps he overtaxed his strength, while all alone in charge of our Station. That was towards the end of 1892 and beginning of 1893. Mr. Hill is just having his eyes opened to the fact that Missionary life in Africa means a hundred things besides preaching and praying and talking.

" We had a few visits last week from clouds of locusts, which, however, didn't settle near us.

" You may be interested in learning that Colonel Colvile and six officers (including Dr. Moffat) have gone to Wadelai. They mean to deal with Kabarega Unijoro *en route* and bring him to his senses. Kabarega, you may remember, stopped Stanley in 1874–75. He has been the great block between Uganda and Lake Albert Nyanza and I hope he may be crushed.

" Colonel Colvile has two steel boats with him and means to put them on the lake, Albert Nyanza. Then by means of emissaries sent out from the Lake, or from Wadelai, should he reach the latter place, he hopes to ascertain the minds of the tribes about Khartoum regarding the British, and their wish for a British Government.

" The Colonel has 500 trained Soudanese troops with him, and I suppose, if affairs go well, he may establish a post at Wadelai, possibly afterwards he may gradu-

ally push out and establish other posts towards Khartoum, all friendly tribes, who are anxious for British government, being invited to join him.

" You can thus see great possibilities in this move, and if the tribes of the North of Wadelai communicate in a friendly way with the Colonel, a few drill instructors to train them in various military movements, should enable him in a moderate period of time to approach within striking distance of Khartoum. Possibly, however, as soon as Wadelai is reached, and some communication is made with the tribes to the north, Colonel Colvile may return to consult with the home authorities.

" It is difficult to reconcile the present retention of Uganda, and the expensive caravans of 500 men, which our Government are sending every six months, with the do-nothing-definite policy of Mr. Gladstone."

In another letter about ten days later he goes on with the same subject.

" One day Mr. Hill came to me and asked for a few planks with which to make a strong wooden door for his house. I told him how to set about cutting down a tree in the bush and preparing it for the saw-pit, and gave him two picked men to assist him and saw the tree into planks at the saw-pit. For the next few days poor Mr. Hill's face was the very picture of misery and discontent.

" Stepping quietly across to his house one evening I discovered from his own words, ' That he had made a big sacrifice in coming to Africa, and came solely and simply to preach the Gospel.' He had had long discussions with Dr. Stewart as to his duties, had stipulated that he should be Evangelist and, on a little pressing by

Mr. Bruce, had consented to be Teacher also if necessary. He said he hadn't been used to such work as plank sawing and wouldn't continue it. We ought to have had a carpenter for such work. He then criticised and attacked our work, saying our Services were a farce. We had done nothing for God at Kibwezi, and no apparent desire to work for God seemed to exist amongst us. He meant to learn the languages of the natives at all costs.

" It was with great difficulty that I kept my feelings under restraint. I thought of how we had toiled and worked at Kibwezi, and how he now occupied a house and outhouses in the erection of which other hands had toiled; how he and his shared the home vegetables from the garden we had made with such laborious and continuous labours.

" I spoke to him of these things and showed him how I had, ever since my arrival at Kibwezi, been Superintendent, Doctor, clerk, storekeeper, traveller and carpenter. How he was enjoying the fruits of our labours. He declared he couldn't learn the languages if he had to look after two stupid sawyers, who, the moment he sat down with his books, would come and ask him to look at their work. He couldn't find time in the afternoons and during the mid-day rest of three or four hours, when all the work people were in their houses and all was quiet, as he then needed rest. I showed him that amid a hundred other duties both Watson and myself had learned something of Kiswahili and the Kikamba languages. Next day he appeared at his work with a brighter face. It is very satisfying to know that Hill is beginning to see things in their true light. I left him to himself and the language.

" He now says, ' that he had no idea the African languages were so complicated, he finds he can't study more than a few hours daily ; he declares that his ideas of Mission work in Africa are altogether changed and modified.' He asks for information, and volunteers to give half the day to any work that needs to be done about the station. During the past fortnight his wife, a nice blithe little woman of nervous temperament, who seems to have suffered at home from repeated attacks of neuralgia, has been very ill indeed. She is now mending rapidly and when she is quite well again, I hope Mr. Hill will continue broadening and deepening his views of life and Kibwezi till he becomes a useful man.

" The criticisms passed so very freely on Captain Lugard and Williams and their work in Uganda are in my opinion to a large extent ill grounded. Lugard seems to be as capable a man even as Portal himself. In one sense he has proved another Clive, and by his brilliant schemes, attempted with scanty forces, and attended by a fair amount of success, he has practically forced the hand of Government to do something for the country.

" The influence of passing caravans, which stay here generally for one or two days, is not for good, and the people about us get enough cloth from them, and enough maize from their farms, to make them independent of us.

" At present we pay nothing extra for letters or papers sent us. They are sent from Mombasa regularly once a month by the I.B.E.A. Company, being free of charge, in return for medical services rendered to their passing caravans.

"I killed a zebra, an antelope, and a wild boar all in five days."

(*To Dr. John Howie, 24th March*, 1894.)

"You are quite right as to my being busy. I am tough and wiry, and from morn till eve it is nothing but drudgery, drudgery. I am dirty, and, I am sorry to say, careless in attire and appearance, but I try to do my drudgery with my whole heart. I would cheerfully relinquish the post of Superintendent here to-morrow, if I could do so in honour and settle down in a quiet corner as Medical Missionary pure and simple.

"Your remarks about women and Missionary women, are very sound. You seem to have studied the matter and the sex thoroughly. I agree with you *in toto*, but here's a Barkis who is willin', but where's the Peggotty to come from? I am not joking in the least when I say that I firmly believe I shall be a bachelor to the end. I have loved, and do love and have not lost, but I don't care to go further in such matters. Possibly my life may be one of constant toil and adventure in Africa, and it may never be my lot to be anything more than a mere pioneer, a paver of the way for others.

"The death of Sir William Mackinnon followed by Mr. Bruce's death in December last, has placed us and our Mission in rather a trying position. Both gentlemen were my only correspondents on Mission business and prospects. Since they are gone it would appear as though our Home Committee was anxious to keep the Mission going, yet at the same time to transfer its care to other shoulders. There is doubtless wisdom too in their thinking thus, for a Mission such as ours still in its

infancy, ought to be placed in the good keeping of permanent caretakers.

"Such permanent caretakers may be found in the Church of Scotland or the Edinburgh Medical Missionary Society, and to one or other of these the Mission may be transferred. At the same time an endowment fund of say £40,000 is likely to be raised by the friends of the late Sir William Mackinnon to maintain the Mission permanently.

"I think it would be a mistake to continue spending £1,000 a year on the place. I have said so to our Committee and even suggested that, as things are, one Missionary and his wife, or two single Missionaries, could easily work the parish at a cost of say about £300 a year. The big houses on our Station could be destroyed and a station on a smaller scale maintained.

"Sometimes I think that my future will not be wrapped up in a Mission, but in some larger wider sphere of work where I may have an influence for good in many directions, not all of them purely missionary. If this is to be so, I shall be happy. At present a Doctor is wanted for Uganda for the Government Service. I believe if I said the word to Colonel Colvile, he would ask me to join him at once. But I have a lot of heavy grinding to do before I can be the useful man I hope one day to be."

CHAPTER XIII

THE STRUGGLE CONTINUED

During all this time steady hard work was being carried on by Mr. Watson, who had been left free for the study of native languages, school-work and itinerating. The school, which had with great difficulty been started, and was at first attended by about thirty children, had eventually to be closed, as it was extremely hard to make the parents see the necessity for education, and these children, entirely unaccustomed to any mental exertion, proved stubborn material. But the services had been regularly conducted; the day beginning with the Kiswahili hymn of praise. There were two services on the Sunday and one on Wednesday. But of course it was not to be expected that many of the Wakamba would come. There was a comparatively small population in the district around, and the service was carried on by those who still understood very little of the local tongue, and doubtless were often quite unintelligible when they thought they were speaking it. As every one who deals with the untutored mind knows, even when the medium of communication is perfect it is not easy to discover whether the stolid man who listens, really understands, or only agrees to what is said, as the way of least trouble.

Charters honestly confessed that their influence with the native population around was at present nil, but

he added that the medical work, dressing of sores and attending to the sick, was beginning to make some impression. Mr. Hill and his wife were an acquisition, but the community had lost by the death of the carpenter, who had first come out—a Mr. John Linton—and no other carpenter had been sent to replace him.

Charters urged on the Directors the establishment of an out-station as a feeder to the central one, by way of extending the influence throughout Ukambani. Mr. Watson wanted to devote himself altogether to this extended service, and to become entirely an itinerant missionary, work for which he was well suited.

Charters was also urging the need of a saw-mill, as the water power in the station would be sufficient to turn it and much time wasted in hand-sawing would be saved.

The loss of the two pioneer Directors of the great Chartered Company was a serious blow. They had not only established the Mission, but given it every support in their power. One of Mackinnon's ideas, the opening up of a road from the coast, was now in being, and later on when the railway was being made, it proved invaluable. This road formed a ready means of proceeding against the slave-dealers with their gangs, as they could be caught on their way down to the coast, and much more easily kept in check by ready movements, than when the pursuing force had to plunge through jungle tracks.

On his return from Mombasa for the second time, Charters began to suffer from the intermittent attacks of fever, which are the lot of almost every white man in the tropics. He went out to the Mkindu Plains with a friend for a few days, and thought he was better on his

return, but very shortly after he was down again. Then the health of Mrs. Hill began to be a source of constant anxiety. She was really at that time quite unfit for residence in the tropics, but had hoped that the transfer from England might re-establish her. She became so ill that at length it was obvious she must be taken down to the hospital at Mombasa, as there was no woman to attend to her at Kibwezi. The only person who could accompany her was Charters, and again he had to break in on his own important work and tackle that long journey of two hundred miles each way, with a sick woman to convoy. He arrived back at Kibwezi on the 14th of June, and the fever now broke out again, complicated with attacks of ague. Yet he gallantly struggled on, hoping to get the better of these weaknesses of the flesh, and never sparing himself.

His chief material interest at this time was a scheme to improve the irrigation of the station by a water trench, work which had always interested him particularly. Also he was setting up a dormitory for the Galla lads mentioned earlier, who were to come and be trained at the mission, and form a nucleus for missionary work by means of native helpers.

In Charters' own letters extending over this time, we get glimpses of all these things. He speaks continually of the language difficulty :—

" Watson, as I told you before, wants to get to a station in some populous centre, or failing that, he means to go home. Meanwhile our Committee are considering the question of Mission extension and seem favourably inclined.

" We must have a carpenter sent out soon ; I am going on strike if they don't send us one, for we must

get at the native languages. I cannot say that I speak either Kiswahili or Kikamba, though I can talk and make myself understood on ordinary matters in both.

" You see I have been kept busy, in fact overworked, at lots of other things. Now I've begun in earnest with verbs and words of the Kikamba. It is a language full of subtleties and nobody yet knows what the Grammar may turn out to be.

" Many of the words however are akin, or identically the same, as some of the Congo words. There is no literature in this Kikamba language, so we have a task cut out for us. The other language, Kiswahili, is that spoken in Zanzibar and all down the East African coast. We have some literature and New Testament in this language, but unfortunately the few coast men we have on our station don't speak the language of the books, but a sort of mixture.

" I mean at all costs to get up Kikamba and Ki-Masai, and look forward to some day making good use of having acquired them thoroughly.

" Poor Mrs. Hill has been very ill for nearly a month now and her husband has tended her with the utmost devotion. He has volunteered for any work that is going on, on the station, and says his views of life and work are now entirely changed. To my mind it is not right to bring ladies here till at least a Railway or some better means of communicating with the coast exists. Of course some men consult only themselves and ram-stam into a place without knowing anything about it, taking, perhaps, a fine young wife with them, and she, poor creature, may find the life pretty hard even though she has good health. How many such good and gentle women have thus gone to premature graves in Africa,

it would be hard to say. A little forethought, a little patience, would have made things so different and many stations would now be rejoicing in the presence of ladies, gentle voices and comforts, that now only show a few mounds and a cross or a stone with a sad story.

" I wish I could take a run home for six months and give the Doctor a lift with some of his extra work, something that I could really do.

" Yes, my trip to the Coast was very enjoyable, even though I had to keep worrying the Transport Department about carriers. On New Year's Day I got a lovely zebra, so we didn't want for meat. Our bicycles could have been used over great parts of the waggon road which is now really completed, but we had them carefully packed for carriage. Since reaching Kibwezi I've been too busy to go on the bicycle even once. The men and the Europeans walk all the way, but the lady is carried in a hammock and only walks by way of a change. If we only had the railway or waggons on the road we should then see things about us moving to a lively tune.

" I am now busy taking levels and hope in the course of two months to have another quarter of a square mile cleared of bush and irrigated with water from our little crystal stream.

" We expect soon also to have a lot of Communists settling within a hundred or two hundred miles from us. But I fear their scheme of life will be a failure Possibly they may pass through our station *en route* to their new abode.

" A caravan of three hundred men is expected here this week bound for Uganda. It is a great pity that men in office at home are so short-sighted and can't see that

a do-nothing-definite policy means loss and delay and future troubles increased. But I suppose we'll always have some such small unthinking men about us.

"Let them give us the Mombasa-Nyanza Railway and all the gun boats on the East African coast could be sent to some other station, ready for service if wanted."

(*8th April*, 1894.)

"The Uganda caravan left us this morning about 5 a.m., amid yells and shrieks and drumming that suggested a hundred devils let loose. Major Smith (1st Life Guards) was urging me privately to leave Kibwezi and accept a post in Uganda, where I should have more medical work and be all round of greater service to Africa. He said, and there is a good deal of truth in it too, that for me to remain at Kibwezi, without any prospects of our work developing in the near future, was simply a waste of time and a throwing away of myself, even though we were working splendidly on certain lines, and had now decidedly the finest station in British East Africa. He told me I could count on over £400 a year and everything found.

"I explained to the Major that I couldn't leave Kibwezi at present and retain my honour, but he wishes me to think over matters, and if our Mission changes hands and I am free to go to Uganda, even in a year's time, to accept Government service."

(*15th April*, 1894.)

"We at Kibwezi are anxiously awaiting the arrival of the next mail from home; we have heard the stirring news of Mr. Gladstone's resignation, and of Lord

Rosebery being Prime Minister. We also expect some further communication from Mr. Peter Mackinnon regarding the future of this Mission.

" The plan of the Mission was admirably conceived—Religious, Medical, Industrial, Educational. Thus, Heart and Head and Hand and Body were all to be looked after, and surely nobody can gainsay that a native taught to work, as well as sing and pray, is a better man than the native who only knows the latter.

" One does feel a bit impatient to know what is to be and prepare for it. In view of any possible changes, I am writing by this mail that I shall be quite pleased to work as a simple medical missionary here, and give up the superintendentship should coming changes render it desirable that I should do so.

" You may think it strange that I should take this step. Well I cannot write and tell you exactly all my reasons for doing so ; they are many. My work ever since my arrival here has been largely drudgery. In a hundred little ways I have tried to think of those working with me, how to make them comfortable and happy. I have never yet asserted my position as Superintendent. Possibly I may have been wrong in adopting this *modus operandi*, but in a Mission it seems to me to be the wisest and best.

" At any rate here I am perfectly happy, yet a little disappointed that my time should be of necessity so fully occupied with the general work of the station that I really get very little about amongst the natives. We have no carpenter and, unfortunately for me, I must be a sort of handy all-round man, and have in a measure to take his place.

" Possibly bright times are in store for us, brighter than we imagine, when we have a carpenter, and perhaps lots of children from captured slave dhows, sent to us to be trained.

" You are not to think from the foregoing that I am gloomy or in a brown study. I fear that there is a little too much of myself in this letter and possibly you are tired of it already. Please forgive me for being selfish. I daresay during your long life-experience, with its sunshine and shadow, that you too have come sometimes to a crossing where you have had to stop for a bit, or even seem to go back a little, and presently the cause became apparent, when you saw that to have gone ahead blindly would have meant disaster. I think I am near some such crossing now, and I will try to be patient in waiting for the go-on signal. For some years past I have had it strongly rooted in my mind that my African career will not stop short of Khartoum.

" Some religious people talk glibly and thoughtlessly of God's leading them, when perhaps their own passions or likings, or the devil himself (if he is a personality), is really their guide. My idea of Khartoum originates and exists in my mind I don't know how, but it is there. Meantime my greatest ambition is to learn the Kikamba and Masai languages and, if it ever is my privilege to know them thoroughly, and help in translating the gospels into them, I think I could die happy. The Masai roam all over East Africa, at least Central Africa, cattle-stealing, and slaying all who oppose them. From Uganda itself right to the coast the natives are in constant fear of the Masai; and I shouldn't wonder if in the future these Masai became soldiers of British East Africa."

(*Camp at Samburn :* 3 *days from Mombasa,* 3*rd June,* 1894.)

" Since I left home it seems as though death had taken a strong fancy for many friends, and while I am thankful that as yet we have seen no European death at Kibwezi, a deep feeling of sadness comes over me when I think of the home losses. Only this morning as I trudged along ahead of my small caravan, half my thoughts were of the great Creator who had made the hill and vale around me so beautiful, and half of my thoughts were of Sir William Mackinnon, Mr. Bruce, and the pleasant times of eighteen months ago. I am thirty years of age and it seems only now that things seen are appearing to me in their true light.

" I think I told you in my previous letter of Mrs. Hill's illness and some of the causes which I think helped to aggravate matters. Towards the middle of May I thought it advisable to take her to Mombasa, ready if necessary to send her home should the change not work the cure.

" I am happy to tell you now that she is perfectly well and will rejoin us at Kibwezi in three or four weeks. To my mind the country is not, and will not be, ready for ladies till we have a railway from the Coast to Kibwezi. True love thinks seriously and looks ahead, and will never place the object of that love in circumstances where comfort and an enjoyable life are difficult to attain.

" On the march from Kibwezi to the Coast, with Mrs. Hill as patient, being carried in a hammock, I had a dreadful time of it, wet through and through nearly every day, no decent changes of clothing, since porters were scarce, every afternoon nearly, fever, fever, and

then, on reaching camp after a miserable tramp of ten or fifteen miles, I had to see about getting tea made for my patient and look after her.

"I had been working very hard before we left Kibwezi at rock-breaking, and the feverishness was hanging over me, then on our first day, we got a dreadful soaking, and on my reaching camp at the tail-end of the caravan, I found poor Mrs. Hill wet through and shivering as though in ague, while her husband seemed not to know what to do to help her. I seized a stone from one of the camp fires and wrapping it up in a towel, put it at her feet, then emptying my three water-bottles into a kettle I soon had a cup of tea ready and then a nip of brandy to my patient, and a nip to myself, worked wonders all round. . . .

"One day, while walking along thinking seriously about lots of things, and not noticing how I walked, I was suddenly startled by seeing a snake jump up at my feet and catch a lizard in its mouth and then make off into the grass. I ran after the snake and whacked it with my stick, but it managed to get into thick bush and there I saw it preparing to swallow the lizard entire.

"Another day I was walking along all alone and quite abstracted in mind, when a fierce yell from some animal quite near made me look, and there, only thirty yards off, was a wild dog. These dogs are much bigger than our collies, have long black hair over the body and white-tipped tails. Often they are seen in herds of twenty or thirty, sometimes chasing a zebra and biting pieces out of the poor animal until it falls down from sheer exhaustion when it is at once torn into pieces.

"We had to drink very bad water again and again,

sometimes it was just like pea soup and everything that was cooked in it was gritty with sand.

" It really was water substitute, and at one place, where there is a rock pool, some of the filthy Arabs and carriers about went bathing in the water we were using for cooking. I speedily sent a scare among them when I said quietly, yet decidedly, that the next man I saw bathing would receive the contents of my fowling-piece.

" Such is life in East Africa. I have now made quite a lot of friends along the line of march and manage to secure a few eggs, chickens, and buttermilk now and then from them.

" As we got near to the Coast we travelled through a dense orchard of orange and coconut trees. Coco-nuts by the dozen were gathered by our men, and after boring a hole at the end of each nut they drank the milk. These black men simply walk up the coco-nut trees. We had some nice dates for dessert and also some tinned fruit, which a friend in Mombasa sent me when he heard of my being near. I only stayed four days in Mombasa, and on the fifth day began my return journey.

" Again we drank lots of coconut milk, and passed through the orange groves. Each day we walked some fifteen miles and then camped.

" These black men carry heavy loads of 70 lbs. day after day. Sometimes, when emergency arose, I have walked twenty or twenty-two miles and the poor blacks have followed me carrying these loads.

" If we had bad water to drink on the way down country, we had even worse on our way back. At one place over a stretch of thirty-three miles we found just enough pea-soup coloured water to give us one meal.

" On the seventh night of my return journey I camped

close to beautiful running water and after dinner all the camp went to sleep.

"Now it so happened that I had a fine milk goat with me and a kid also. These had been lent to the sick lady, and I was taking them back to the lender. The big goat was tied up quite close to some of my men and went to sleep also. About midnight a dreadful yelling and screaming arose from the whole camp. A leopard had sprung right into the midst of the sleeping camp and seized the goat by the throat. The yells of the men had scared the savage beast and driven it away, but the poor goat seemed almost dead, and the marks of the leopard's teeth in its throat showed how quickly and accurately the leopard knew how to accomplish its work.

"I had the goat placed close to a camp fire, between two men, and all the camp fires were brought to a bright blaze, but do you believe it? In half an hour the leopard again sprang on the goat, stepping over the sleeping men, and this time would have carried the goat away but for the red hot embers which were thrown at it. I was sorry for the poor goat, now dead, but I really believe the black men were glad, for they ate it all up in a few hours.

"Next day I had a fine white donkey given me to take on to Kibwezi, for the officer in charge of the station nearest to us. I only rode him for 13 miles out of 80 miles—he was too slow for my taste, and I could only keep him on the trot by continually whipping him, and this was more than I cared to do. I let my little servant boy ride him most of the way.

"Another day I saw a hyena on the road, and another day the footprint of a lion, a giraffe, and a rhinoceros.

" So you can see I was quite among wild beasts. I could have shot a zebra (for camp meat) on one occasion, but I am more anxious to have a lion, or a rhinoceros, or a giraffe. . . . I received letters from Mr. and Mrs. Stanley by this last mail. Stanley tells me that I am too open, and write rather freely the thoughts that pass through my mind. He refers to a letter I wrote to Mr. Peter Mackinnon. He says that Peter Mackinnon is an extremely sensitive man and that my letters would not only sadden him, but make him think that our work at Kibwezi was not going on as it should.

" I really believe Stanley is right in what he says about Mr. Mackinnon's sensitive nature, yet I only wrote what is absolute truth. Of course I would not dream for a moment of placing my opinion against Stanley's, or against one twenty years my senior, yet if I am to suppress all that is not quite agreeable, then I shall not be true to myself or my duty.

" Strange to say Mr. Mackinnon, in writing to me, seems to bear out Stanley's opinion of the effect of my letter. It's a terrible dilemma whether to write the truth, as in duty bound, to those who ought to know the truth, or whether it would have been wiser to keep silence while the heart is hot within.

" I could face half a dozen lions or a thousand savages but this is more than I can face, and I really wish our Committee would let me work as Medical Missionary and make somebody else the Superintendent in my place. Maybe some day I'll be Medical Officer for Uganda, unless I get settled down somewhere in life. There are no ties to make me settle, love of work would do it.

" Stanley deplores the fact that not one man in fifty

who goes or is sent to Africa, to work in the Interior, is fitted or qualified as he should be for such work. With some, work is a dreadful bore, and with others it's all talk and praying, but no real work.

" Very few adopt *laborare est orare* as their motto.

" The contents of Sir Gerald Portal's report are deeply interesting to those out here. He is rather hard on the Imperial British East Africa Company, however, and of course while we all respect what has come from Sir Gerald, we mustn't forget that Captain Lugard is also an able man, in my opinion the abler of the two.

" Lugard is that type of man who does his duty well and sticks to it and fights for what is right against all odds. It was Lugard really who has kept Uganda for us. It was Lugard who in going to Kavallis on Lake Albert, showed the possibility of a better force than his, going to and occupying Wadelai, and Lugard has urged, not working through Zanzibar but a clear and separate British protectorate for East Africa.

" I sometimes think that if I was an orator and could move multitudes, nothing would give me more pleasure than to stump the country, and show the danger of the non-continuity policy of the British House of Commons, also how the I.B.E.A. Co., in spite of all its mistakes, has not been well treated and that there is yet time for our Government to wake up and do the square thing for us.

" Sir Gerald speaks in his report of the Company's not having made a road inland. Now had he come *viâ* Kibwezi instead of *viâ* that fever-stricken river, Tana, he would have found one hundred and twenty miles of beautifully made road. This road now covers one

hundred and eighty miles from Kibwezi and already a few waggons are running up and down with loads.

" We meet all sorts and conditions of men and women out here, from the droning Yankee and the man who is always talking about ' don't yer know,' to thorough gentlemen like Major Macdonald.

" I met Major Macdonald three days ago, he is very modest, as modest as he is able and clever, and that's saying a great deal. His quiet manner ought to weigh with Lord Rosebery and bring us the railway in another six months."

CHAPTER XIV

"PATIENCE, PATIENCE!"

(*28th July*, 1894.)

"A DOCTOR'S duties here are not by any means so pleasant nor the results of performance so satisfactory as at home. The native in these parts make a dirty, restless, and stupid patient. He expects to be cured instanter. Washing himself, his wounds, or his cloth is quite out of the question. When ordered to lie still in bed he promises faithfully to do so and then as soon as you are out of sight, he quarrels with his nurse, a native, sits up, then gets up, walks about and perhaps strips off all the bandages you had carefully applied only 15 minutes before, and throws them to the dogs.

"I have had many a sore heart trying to help these miserable wretches, but sometimes when they persist in being obstinate and stupid and filthy, and knowingly so, I feel as though 'a wee bit sweer' would greatly relieve me.

"Uganda affairs seem to be moving steadily, though slowly; Stanley wrote to me two mails ago and said that a generation hence people would laugh at our present slowness *re* Uganda and its Railway; it took a long time for the British people to see a thing and get it into their heads, and then once it got into their heads, it took as long, and was as difficult an operation, to get it out again.

"I often wonder what the future of this Mission will be. The proposed Endowment Fund of £40,000 has not yet been got together. A great desire is manifested at home that all expenditure should be curtailed. I almost fear that the warm, whole-hearted interest in the Mission shown by the late Sir William Mackinnon and Mr. Bruce, is now dead and that the younger Mackinnons (nephews), and the other members of our Committee, would fain place the burden of the Mission on the shoulders of some Church. Some time ago I wrote home asking to be relieved of the Superintendentship and to be allowed to work as 'Medical Missionary.' Our Committee reply that they would like me to remain as Superintendent, it is their wish that I should remain as such. So I suppose I must work away. The Hills are again with us at Kibwezi, both well, and I am happy to say, with sound and sensible views of African Mission life. We have got twenty-two lads from the Masai cattle-stealing tribe, and on Monday our school opens in earnest. The presence of these lads on the station makes the place quite lively, and in the interval at mid-day, I generally find three or four in my bed-room, waiting to be patted and petted a little. I regret very much that press of work has all along prevented my giving a great deal of time to the study of the native languages. I have a great liking for such study and the three languages, Ki-Masai, Ki-Kamba, and Ki-Swahili are all deeply interesting; the two latter being closely allied. The advent of a carpenter here would give me all the time I desire. So strongly do I feel on the matter of acquiring these native languages, that I should not care to return to Europe without knowing at least two of them thoroughly.

" To remain and work as I have been doing, with little or no time for linguistic study, except an hour or two taken from sleeping hours, is more than I shall care to do. Far better in such a case to burn down half the station, keeping only a little house and our garden, and thus find the wished-for time.

" What would you think of my going on to Uganda, say if I was so placed that I could honourably do so ? My present feeling is that I shall be at Kibwezi for nearly four years to come, that in that time the Mission will have gone to some church, that possibly a new Superintendent may relieve me for more direct work amongst the natives and the languages."

(11*th Aug.*, 1894.)

" We sadly miss good music and good singing out here. Only last night I had the pleasure of listening in the darkness to a few of our station workmen singing some hymn tunes which they had learnt at the Coast. The Concert concluded with ' God Save the Queen ' and was quite comforting and inspiring. It seems to be universally the case that man's first attempt at song or music (apart from baby-music, which I think also is of the same nature), takes the form of a chant, frequently arranged in a minor key. Often both words and music of a chant are extemporised instanter say, after a gift of a bullock ; or on reaching water after a long march. Often, often I have listened in Africa to these wild chants of Africa's Children, sometimes, too, entered into the spirit of the chant, through the medium of the music only.

" Our work here in Kibwezi progresses slowly but steadily.

"I have begun irrigation work, whereby we hope to irrigate about one third of a square mile. We have now got a good school of some forty boys.

"Patience, patience! Oh how impatient I am! How miserable I feel in view of the work to be done here. If the body would stand it, the spirit would make me sit up night and day, preparing for and doing the work that seems so overwhelming. Sometimes I feel in the most angelic frame of mind as I think of a possible bright future. The present with its numerous duties makes me far from easy, and the cantankerousness of the native, who is in some cases at least the very embodiment of all that is bad, makes me feel that the devil is not quite eradicated from my nature. The past with its failures and the little real work done, makes me feel like a child that has done wrong and whose only solace is to weep its way to forgiveness! The natives about us at the present time do not seem to have a surplus of food, hence some of them, who own female slaves, have not been feeding them. Quite a number of poor starving women have come to us, having run away from their owners. My *modus operandi* in dealing with these runaways is to have them washed in the stream, then rub their diseased skins over with benzoated lard, give them a few yards of calico, feed them and, as soon as they are able, set them to work.

"A few days ago a skeleton came walking into my house in the darkness. Never have I seen (not even in the dissecting room) a thinner body. The poor soul was at once attended to. Her arms, up to the shoulders and her legs from the ankles up were at once wrapped up in greased bandages. Her chest ditto. Brandy and

switched eggs, soup, a little milk, coffee and biscuits were, and are, being given as she can take them.

"Can you believe it? The wretch who owns her came to take her away two days after she came to us. I talked to him for a bit, then laid him on his face on the ground, and, since talking and reason and higher things could not influence him, I tried to reach his most tender feelings by giving him a sound thrashing with a stick. My patient was all but dead the day before yesterday, and I had to stay by her for over two hours.

"It is a matter for rejoicing that our Government have at length proclaimed a Protectorate over Uganda. The railway must soon follow, then on to Khartoum. The Belgians, in a semi-secret way, are really co-operating with us, to shut out France from the Nile and help us in re-acquiring Khartoum and the Soudan. Lieutenant Villiers (2nd Life Guards) told me a few days ago that we are ready now to go to Khartoum from Uganda, if only the order was given. As it is, a large consignment of rifles and ammunition is expected to pass this way for Uganda in the course of a few months. We only need a few more Elizabethan men in our Home Ministry, men of the Cecil Rhodes type, to do a little evil in order to hasten a great good.

"But while we at Kibwezi take note of what is going on about us we must do our little bit of building."

In a letter to the two little daughters of Dr. Joseph Coats (*8th July*, 1894) he says: "All the people about here are likely to be very hungry soon, for great clouds of locusts have eaten up all their farms. Sometimes as I walked along for miles and miles, the locusts would fly in my face and strike me. They seemed like a great snowstorm and made a noise like a great rushing Wind.

" An officer who passed through here a few weeks ago saw fourteen big lions all together quite near our station and, though he was very much afraid at first, he managed to shoot one and get its head and skin as trophies.

" The black people about here seem all very lazy and stupid and dirty. Some of them never wash for months and months, and you could easily scrape dirt off them. Our new black cook is like a sweep, his clothes are always so dirty, and in spite of all we can do to teach or help him, his kitchen is always in disorder, plates dirty, pots unwashed. He cannot even make porridge in spite of a dozen lessons. Now, nearly all Europeans take a stick and beat their cook soundly to make him do his duty. I have not done that yet, but some day I may, even though it gives me pain to do it. I often think that our cook helps to make us ill sometimes with his awful messes. It is no good getting a new cook from the Coast, for they are all the same.

" Last night, Sunday, just before going to bed, I called over to the two sentries we have on night watch to see if they were awake and they were. But early this morning about 1 or 2 o'clock, I heard a man roaring and crying, as though he was being killed, then somebody knocked thick sticks together. Only two nights before our sentries had reported that the Masai cattle stealers were near our station, and if these Masai got in in the night, we should all be killed in a few minutes. Hearing the cries of this man I thought we might have the Masai about, so throwing my overcoat about me, I rushed out towards where I heard the noise but saw nobody. I then went to see why our sentries didn't come and wake me and tell me what had happened, and

to my disgust found them both sound asleep behind a lot of empty boxes. To-day I gave them both a sharp punishment and then forgave them. Sometimes when I have worked hard all day I go home to find the natives are waiting at the door for me to settle some quarrel between them."

(*24th August*, 1894.)

" Life here in the wilds of East Africa is too stern and real for trifles or thoughtlessness, and makes one, willing or unwilling, feel kindly the necessity for carefulness and patience, aye and sometimes a measure of self-restraint that tests a man's strength and character very severely.

" Your advice *re* coming home after a time for a change and rest is very sound. Probably I'll be home in three or four years from now, but before there can be any homecoming on my part, I should like to see a good permanent set of houses built, the native language reduced to writing, and the whole district in a fair way of being taught Christianity and its blessings. I don't quite agree with you in your remarks about the African. True he is a miserable wretch in this part, but all the same, if we are in sympathy with the Man of Sorrows, we see even the natives as He sees them. I have met with gross ingratitude from many of them.

" To my mind a man's capacity for usefulness out here is largely to be measured by his thoughtfulness and amount of self restraint. Perhaps these things count as much as bodily energy, or even for more. I don't know what the future has in store for me, but a wiser stronger Hand than mine is behind the scenes. My present thoughts are that I won't return to Kibwezi, if once I

leave it and go home. Possibly I may settle at home, or enter some wider sphere of usefulness in Uganda, should such opportunity present itself. There are some very good Government berths going out here just now. The lowest salary I have heard of is £450, clear. I suppose I would have got that, if I had cared to take a Doctor's position, as suggested to me by Major Smith (1st Life Guards), but I promised the late Sir William Mackinnon and Mr. A. L. Bruce to be faithful to my trust and duty.

" I might have done a great deal more in the photographic line, and also in writing to newspapers, than I have done, but on every hand there is so much work to be done and often I feel dead tired when the evening shadows fall. Then again I have no desire to appear in the newspapers. I don't know that our Committee would like it. One of my letters was put in the *Herald* in 1893, but I was not a party even to that. You see to become a newspaper correspondent means either fame or notoriety. The latter I don't at all wish for, and the former, as Ward Beecher used to put it, ' is a last year's nest from which the bird has flown.'

" You know I daresay that I have no entertaining allowance from the mission, yet every European that has passed Kibwezi during the past nineteen months has been kindly treated and entertained. Sick officers have been nursed back to health, and fed gratis ; sick porters as well. Only last week, one poor fellow, a Mr. Purkiss, who was lately at Wadelai, reached Kibwezi, carried by four men in a hammock, and in thirty hours after his arrival he passed away to where there is no more fever or death. He had what they call Black Water fever, this being his fourth attack, and he reached me in a state of collapse, with continuous

dark green, almost black vomit, great restlessness, subnormal temperature. I had to give medicines by injection (subcutaneous), but coma set in soon after his arrival and he never really rallied. It was a sad week for me, and between my thirty hours' watch and a second all night at making a coffin, I was thoroughly worn out when all was over.

"I have now written to the Consul-General in Zanzibar, stating that unless we receive some compensation for our services in this way, I shall absolutely refuse to have sick porters left on my hand, or sick officers either.

"We expect a caravan of 1,000 men here soon with rifles and ammunition for Uganda, a great number of caravans are continually passing through our station just now, mainly for Uganda, and we see some strange sights."

"It is so easy to think only of self, to write about self, and perhaps the want of companionship, leading to much inward brooding and speculation, tends to make self in Africa figure too largely in one's present and in one's future plans and prospects.

"The principal item in my correspondence with our Home Committee of late, has been the keeping down of expenses. You can imagine how much latitude there is for poetry or loving expressions in a correspondence of that nature.

"Unfortunately our Committee never seem to think that, since my advent at Kibwezi, the annual Mission expenditure has decreased by the sum of from £300 to £400 and this decrease was made principally owing to the loss of a carpenter never replaced.

"In spite of disappointments and numerous distrac-

tions, the work of Kibwezi Station has steadily gone on. The garden is now completed, the little six feet wide stream running through it adds to its beauty and the rock-lined edges of the stream, supporting the clay walks, make a pleasant path for a short meditative walk. A channel for irrigating about half a square mile in area, has now been cut, the ground is pretty well cleared, and will be planted in a few weeks. This irrigation channel will also afford us the means of using a water wheel to drive a sawmill.

"At present my personal attention, and the whole of my time, is being given to the completing of the brick (sun-dried) dormitory, 100 feet long by 16 feet wide, for our schoolboys. It is exhausting work to spend from 6 a.m. till 11.30 a.m., and then from 3 p.m. till about 6 p.m. in the open air, sometimes under a hot sun, amidst mud, and bricks weighing each about 30 lbs. Every thought and every fibre in my body as I work, is directed mainly to getting the work done as well and as speedily as possible. I know that all my assistants (blacks) are glad to get to bed at night as soon as they have eaten, and I too find myself very tired and sleepy by 8 p.m. My reason for working so hard at this house is, because we must have it thoroughly roofed in before the rains begin, otherwise the bricks will be damaged.

"It is quite uncommon for Europeans in Africa to work as our gardener and myself do at Kibwezi, a lazy life and an immoral life are common to most Europeans in these parts. It is amusing to hear our Coast natives speak in a half complaining manner of the hard work of Kibwezi. And yet you have only to remind them that they have grown fat under it, to make them grin from ear to ear.

" Hard work is all very good, it may be a blessing in disguise. But when I left home for Kibwezi, over twenty months ago, I little dreamt that for months I should simply be an intelligent navvy.

" Of medical work I have practically none, and even if I had scope for a big practice, it would be difficult to find time for it, with a new station to build, or rather the entire station to rebuild.

" Languages have to be learnt and reduced to writing, and you can imagine how much inclined one is to study languages, when from head to foot the clothes are splotched with mud and the body is worn out with the day's toil."

CHAPTER XV

THE MYSTERY

THEN, with startling suddenness came the end. No more weariness and desperate clinging to the work he had undertaken to do while his overburdened mind and body had to be forced on.

A cablegram reached the headquarters of the great Chartered Company in Pall Mall East.

"Watson, East African Scottish Mission, writing October 8th, states Charters accompanied Colquhoun, Mkindu Plains, September 27th, leaving porters skinning antelope proceeded alone. Has not been heard of since."

There is something so dramatic in this extraordinarily sudden finish descending upon the patient life of this young man that it must have attracted attention anywhere. But in this case with so much interest centred on this new-born Mission the effect spread far and wide, and many who had never heard of Charters before, became deeply interested in his mysterious fate.

There was to be no more "three or four years ahead" for him, no more visions of home-coming.

And as time went on the mystery deepened, for not a trace was found either of him, or of the companion he had gone with, as there must have been had they been the prey of lions.

As the details become known they showed that Mr. Watson had planned to set off on the 17th September for a mission tour with the idea of looking for a site for a new station at Nzoli. The day before, Dr. Charters suggested that they should have a Communion service together, which was done, and the next day, just as Mr. Watson was about to start, he said he might be absent three weeks or so before returning for tools and stores, as he intended to found the mission at Nzoli if the place were suitable. The two men were standing close by the great dormitory which Charters had set up for the Masai boys and the others who were being trained. It was not complete, and as he shook hands with his comrade he remarked: "Well, if, when you come in sight of the station, you don't see the roof on that building you'll know there's something wrong"—prophetic words!

A few days later there came to the station a Mr. Colquhoun, who had been going on an expedition to the neighbourhood of Mt. Kenya, with a German, Dr. Kelb. This man had changed his mind, and leaving his companion some thirty miles to the north-east, had got some native carriers to take his personal belongings, tent and other gear, down to Kibwezi, with the idea of getting other men there to enable him to return to the coast, or, if not, to take the chance of some down-going caravan. Whilst waiting for this, as he found carriers to the coast impossible to get, he suggested to Charters they should go for a few days' shooting. Charters wanted to get on with his work and was unwilling to go, but as he was rather run down his remaining colleagues persuaded him that a few days off would do him good.

From this point Mr. Hill describes what happened :—

(*Kibwezi, October 4th*, 1894.)

" A week since to-day, Dr. Charters, our chief, and an English gentleman (a Mr. Colquhoun, who had come out for the Freeland Expedition and had been staying in camp beside us for some days past waiting porters) started off with a tent and a few men for a day or two's shooting. The porters and askari had instructions to pitch the tent close beside a camp two marches from here, on the Uganda track, the place is called M'kindu, and was well known to both the doctor and the blacks, but not to Colquhoun, who had never been in these parts before. It is a fair five and a half hours quick march from Kibwezi, if you go in one instead of the usual two marches.

" They all left Kibwezi about 6 o'clock last Thursday morning ; the men, pushing on in the track, reached M'kindu all right, pitched camp, and got all ready for the Doctor and Colquhoun, who were coming through the bush instead, for a chance shot at big game with the Doctor's Express rifle ; also Colquhoun's black boy went with them, and two other little Masai boys who were in service in the Doctor's house when not at school.

" The next we heard of them was from these three boys, who turned up here on Friday night with the story that they (the boys) had been lost all the previous day and night in the bush. It seems Colquhoun shot a beast in the bush, and all three boys were left by it, to take the skin off it, and cut it up, the Doctor and Colquhoun going on for another shot in the meantime, and promising to be back shortly when all would resume

the march to M'kindu together. Well, the boys waited till dark, when a leopard chased them away ; they got lost, and eventually turned up at Kibwezi, as I have said, next night, utterly done up.

" Next morning we sent them back to the camp at M'kindu in charge of an askari. This was Saturday, and that afternoon about 4 p.m. the askari came back, saying he had found the camp and left the boys, but neither Dr. Charters nor Colquhoun had yet turned up there.

" Paterson then left at once with every available man in the mission, for a thorough search in all directions. This has gone on every day till now, and as yet we have not the least trace of the missing ones.

" The day after Paterson left, I started off myself to the village of the headman of the Wakamba hereabouts, and induced some ten of their best young men to come and join the search, and got them away the same morning ; and on Wednesday this week, not hearing any word from Paterson, I left the mission in charge of Mrs. Hill, and went myself to M'kindu to see what was being done, returning the same day—something like a thirty-two or thirty-four mile tramp.

" I have arranged to relieve Paterson on Saturday this week, and take over the search into my own hands. Everything that man can do will be, and is being done, but I greatly fear we shall never hear of either of them again.

" They had absolutely nothing with them in the shape of provisions, and even their water-bottles were left with the boys. They had only the one gun too, and but very few cartridges, as I found the cartridge-bags had also been left with the boys when they turned up next day.

" I have seen the bush where they went, a great dead level plain, one mass of thick scrubby trees and long wavy grass ; through its midst twists the little track leading to Uganda, about six inches wide, and often all but lost. It could be passed again and again in these dark moonless nights without being noticed ; and if you miss it, you miss salvation and meet death most terrible by hunger and thirst and wild beasts. Rhinoceros abound in it, as is evidenced by their tracks ; possibly they attempted to bag one with their one gun, which few can afford to boast ; but I greatly fear we shall never know. If we could only get some trace of any kind. It is dreadful.

" Another painful detail is that Mr. Jackson and another white man, in charge of a large Government caravan, passed up to M'kindu the same day *en route* for Uganda. Jackson and the other man had been entertained by the doctor for the two previous days, and all four white men went along together, and even for a short distance into the bush, for a shot. Jackson and the other then struck back into the track, while our two still went on.

" I have sent word to Paterson to send men to Mr. Watson asking him to join us here at once and take over the responsibility. From Saturday next, and until he comes, I shall continue the search, though in my own mind I have no hopes of finding either of them alive.

" The country is not populated thereabout by anyone, it is a kind of neutral zone of Wakamba and Masai, and both wander charily about. It is practically given up to game and wild beasts, has no houses, roads, or even tracks. Being dead level, too, if one is lost it would be almost impossible to pick up the course from any land-

mark. Then Charters had not been at all well of late ; indeed, that was the chief reason why he was prevailed upon to take the holiday. He could not stand great fatigue, and if it was left to Colquhoun, he was entirely ignorant of the district and this part of Africa, though well versed, I believe, in the south.

" The doctor has scarcely ever attempted any shooting, and even now it was at the earnest wish of the whole of us that he took a little recreation for the sake of shaken health."

(5*th October*, 1894.)

" Nothing has yet transpired to throw light on our trouble, but to-day I had again a *shaure* with the leading Wakamba hereabouts, and they tell me that on the very day Dr. Charters and Mr. Colquhoun left here, some of their people were hunting up by the Kuylu Hills, not far from where the doctor was going, and they saw a large war party of the Masai. The alarm swept all through the district in consequence. They say it is possible that the missing friends may have fallen into their hands, and been carried off. In that event they might be alive, but I am afraid there are a thousand chances to one for the opposite conclusion."

Mr. Pigott, Acting Administrator at Mombasa, expressed his opinion that they could hardly have been bushed.

" I do not think they could have been lost, as the Mbwinzau hill, to the south of which Kibwezi lies, is most conspicuous and though the country is very thick in places they could, in my opinion, have seen it by climbing one of the larger trees. Having guns they could not have starved, and they must have known that if

they went to the East, or S.E., they would strike either the Athi river or Kibwezi stream. One is thus led to conclude that either they came on a party of Masai, or that they were attacked by wild beasts, lions or buffaloes. I fear there is very little chance of their being found alive."

There is a little more detail in this account of Mr. Watson's: "On the morning of the 27th September they set out, Dr. Charters intending to return to Kibwezi on the 1st of October at the latest. A large caravan with three Europeans left Kibwezi on its way to Uganda that same morning. Dr. Charters and Mr. Colquhoun overtook this and went in company with the Europeans as far as Mbwinzau hill, two hours from Kibwezi. There they all rested together, Dr. Charters sending on the men with the tent and other necessaries, to make the camp ready, keeping only three boys to follow him and Colquhoun. Either by intention or accident, Mr. Colquhoun's askari went on with his master's rifle, so that they had only one rifle between them. After resting awhile, they seem to have wished the Europeans good-bye, and to have gone on their way, which from this point diverged from the caravan road. After going about one and a half hours, they shot a hartebeest. This was about eleven a.m. They left two boys to skin it and watch the flesh, till they could send back men to fetch it into the camp. The third boy followed them. The boy says he kept them in sight about an hour perhaps, then he lost sight of them, as they were going fast and the grass was long. From that time no trace of them has been found. The boy wandered on, seeking the camp, failed to find it, and slept, or spent the night in a tree. He says there were many lions and other

beasts prowling about under him during the night. The two boys left with the beast that had been shot, waited till 4 p.m., then they set out to seek the camp. They also failed to find it, and wandered about till midnight, and then lay down at the root of a tree, the elder boy watching while the younger slept. In the morning they met the third boy, and the three tried to find the camp until about mid-day, and then turned towards Kibwezi, which they reached at 7 p.m. on September 28th. Next morning, Mr. Paterson (gardener at the station), sent a man with the boys to show them the way to the camp, taking it for granted that Dr. Charters and the other gentleman had reached camp all right.

" Meantime the men who had been carrying the tent had reached the camping place, and pitched the tent in due time. They waited, expecting their masters till dark (September 27th), then the man in charge went back to the road to look for the *Wanzungu* (Europeans) about 9 p.m. He fired his gun three times, but got no answer, and so returned to camp. Next morning (28th) he and others set out to look for the missing men. Not finding them after some hours and having shot a beast, they returned to camp to eat the flesh and consult what to do. They decided to return to Kibwezi next morning (29th September). They met on the way the man from Kibwezi with the three boys, learned that their masters had not returned to Kibwezi, and sent word to Mr. Paterson that the *Wanzungu* were lost.

" Paterson got the news well on in the afternoon, could hardly believe it, but set out with all available men to make sure. Just as darkness came on, he met the men with the tent and baggage at Mbwinzau Hill, and turned them back to the camping place. After a

while the men refused to go further in the dark, so that it was Sunday (30th September), before Paterson was able to begin the search. He searched till Friday, 5th October, when he returned to Kibwezi, and Mr. Hill (evangelist at the station) went out to carry on the search. Mr. Hill returned to Kibwezi last Friday, 12th October, declaring further search useless, and expressing a strong conviction that they had been killed or carried off by Masai.

"Meantime, Paterson had sent men off on 2nd October to seek me out, and give me the news. I met the men on the 6th October, just as I was thinking I had finished my day's march, and would be able to rest all the next day (Sabbath), because I was rather foot-sore, having marched every day save one for twenty days. I could hardly take in the news, but, after resting long enough to cook, I set out and did ten or twelve miles that day; next day I did perhaps thirty miles; and on Monday morning I made Kibwezi at 10.30, in time to catch the mail and write a hurried letter to the Administrator at Mombasa. My next impulse was to hurry off and take up the search, but on considering the matter I stayed at Kibwezi. By that time there was no hope of finding the men alive, all that could be hoped for was the gun, a hat, boots, fragments of clothing or bones. It is a sad business! I am told many Wakamba are still searching, as I have told them that if they bring anything to show where and in what way these men have met their end, I shall reward them well. There are many ways possible in which they could have met their death; but few, I think, are probable. The two most probable are (1) they may have been surprised by a band of Masai, and have been killed or carried off;

(2) they may have met with lions, fired, and wounded one without disabling it, and fallen victims to its fury. This, I think, is quite probable, seeing they had only one rifle and probably few cartridges with them. Mr. Jackson, whose caravan, as I have said, left Kibwezi on the same morning as the mission men, in a letter sent back to Dr. Charters, refers to a shot he heard and supposed to be fired by them. I have written to Mr. Jackson asking him to tell me as accurately as possible when and where he heard that shot as, if it was fired by them, it is the last evidence we have of their existence. When I get Jackson's answer, I shall make another effort myself. I don't see that I can hold out any hope of their being alive. All I know about the Masai is against the idea of their having been taken prisoners. At the same time some of the Masai we have here say the Masai would not kill Europeans. As I have said, I incline to the opinion that they have met their death by lions. I now add that never before have I known Dr. Charters to go away to shoot or hunt. He stuck manfully to his duty and was, as Dr. Macdonald of Mombasa said to me, ' the kind of man who would die at his post.' I need say no more."

Mr. Watson was appointed Superintendent in Charters' place and remained so until his death in 1900.

John Paterson wrote to Mr. and Mrs. Charters on December 1st : " It is with much sorrow of heart that I now try to write to you these few lines, trusting that you may find some little comfort from what I have to say in this time of very sore trial. I know that both Mr. Watson and Hill have already written to you telling you of the sad news of the loss of your dear son David,

and it is needless for me to state the circumstances and particulars as you will already know all that I can tell you. I may say that so far we have not been able to ascertain the cause of their going amissing. I feel (unwilling) to mention what we think to be the most likely way; as I know the thought must cause you grief. It does to myself every time I think of it, and it must be much more so with you. What we think to be most likely is that the poor fellows have met with their death at the hands of the Masai. We know for a fact that parties of Masai were seen some two days' march from there between a week and fortnight later, and one Masai was caught by the Wakamba 6 miles from here, and brought in here by our men a little over a week after the white men got lost. His story was that he had been in company with a party of Masai and they had gone away during the night and left him. We questioned him particularly but he denied having seen the white men. We fain would hope that the Masai may have taken them prisoners and in that case they might still be alive, but to be plain, I fear there isn't the slightest hope of that, for as far as we can learn the Masai never take prisoners. I began the search, as you will know, as soon as the news reached Kibwezi. I set out with all the men on the station and searched every place I could think of for a week, then Hill came up and continued searching for another week, but all with no result. We offered a reward to any Wakamba who could find anything belonging to them, but nothing has yet been found, which seems to point to it being Masai, for the Masai would leave no trace. Had they been killed by a lion or any other wild animal we would most likely have found the rifle, water bottles or some remnant of

their clothing. All the Europeans that we have seen since the sad occurrence who know something of the habits of the Masai believe it to have been them. My first thought when the news reached me was that some accident had happened to Dr. Charters, and Colquhoun, trying to find his way to the camp to bring help (lost himself) he being a stranger. But I could not for a moment think of Dr. Charters simply losing himself, if nothing had happened, because he knew the country well, having been over it all before, and with Bwinso (Mbwinzau) Hill in view, which would be a guide, and besides one could not think of a more reliable man, and with such a wide experience of African life. I exerted myself to the utmost while searching, and I would be willing to risk any danger over and over again if I thought I could do anything to save the life of Dr. Charters. He was a dear fellow, and I am sure all who knew him must have felt the same. We miss him tremendously here, and I think nobody so much as me. He and I came out together, lived in one house, took our meals together and worked so unitedly all along. This Mission has had many losses in the few years since it was started. But I believe none so great as the loss of Dr. Charters. He was such a clever fellow, as well as a most practical Christian. His life was full of kind deeds that will have a lasting effect at Kibwezi. When I came back from M'kindu quite a crowd of the natives got round me to ask about their *Bwana Doctari*, that was what they called him. When they learned that I feared the worst, some of them at once began to cry. He was always going amongst them and so attentive when they were sick. He had a good deal of medical work to do. It is surprising the amount of work he

went through, and though Superintendent, he was the hardest worked man on the Mission and besides he was the only one among us that seemed to have a gift for languages. Although overworked all along, he was making rapid progress at the Kikamba language and would have had it reduced to print before his first term of service was finished, had he been spared. Just before he went away he was telling me of the good times we would have after a little studying the language, when a lot of the rough foundation work was finished. He meant to teach us what he knew himself of it.

" But it has not been God's Will to spare him to do this work. He has had something far better for him to do up higher."

Another letter, the more interesting as it was written with complete knowledge of the conditions amid which the mysterious disappearance happened, was that of Henry M. Stanley who had always befriended David Charters : " Mr. George Mackenzie very kindly showed me the report of the Kibwezi Mission respecting the disappearance of Dr. Charters, and a Mr. Colquhoun, some days ago, but I have seen nothing in the newspapers about it. It is so very mysterious that I can scarcely venture upon giving an opinion one way or the other. Knowing Dr. Charters as I did, I gave him more credit for good sense than I should be willing to accord to the victim of a misadventure of this kind and this is the reason why I am so puzzled about the matter. I cannot conceive of a white man of African experience, having boys with him, voluntarily setting off into tall grass with a hunting rifle on his shoulder and with only a white man as his companion. White men in Tropic

Africa are not considered as being mutually useful on such excursions. The heat soon distresses them. The physical power oozes away rapidly and thirst and unconquerable weakness overtakes them, and one who had been five years in Africa, like Charters, cannot be imagined by me—being a doctor and naturally observant and reasonable—doing anything so imprudent as he is described to have done in the narrative from Kibwezi. Had Mr. Colquhoun, who was new to Africa, and a member of the Freeland Community, gone into the grass alone with the same unconcern as he would tread upon an English meadow and have thus disappeared, it would not have occasioned me much surprise, but that a clever and sensible man like Charters should have done so, does astonish me. The region is infested with lions and leopards I am told, but that both men should have become a prey to them is most unlikely. Assuming that the narrative is true, the two young men have been probably lifted by the Masai, in which case they could not survive any protracted captivity, or they were despatched there and then. But the story is lame and inapplicable to what I knew of Dr. Charters. Having taken boys to the camp, why have gone away from it to such a distance that no sound of a gun or cry is heard and without some one to carry the gun, cartridge, pouch and water? Supposing that they had both departed on an impulse, having seen game or fresh tracks, a half-hour's tramp would have recalled them to consciousness of their condition and they would have retraced their steps. Therefore, as no gunshot or cry was heard, one can only surmise that they must have walked into an ambuscade which had been formed with a view of carrying off stragglers from

the Uganda Caravans, and been overpowered in an instant. Both Mrs. Stanley and myself are exceedingly distressed with the news, but we have been cherishing hopes that we should hear from Mombasa shortly something which will relieve suspense at least.

" Only three or four days before Mackenzie's visit Charters' last letter to us of many pages was read out to the family and I was but waiting a leisure hour to reply to him. If this reported disappearance turns out to be the end of our hopes respecting Charters it will be a sad disappointment to all who knew him. If ever one deserved well of fate surely he did, for he was a patient, hard-striving, high-minded soul. I think the fact of a man spending three years of his life on the Congo as an engineer in a Mission steamer, and on reaching home, devoting himself for four years to win a diploma as Doctor, and after gaining it turning round sharply to bestow what he had gained on Africa, is exceedingly good for this hard matter-of-fact Epoch.

" Thrice blest whose lives are faithful prayers,
Whose loves in higher love endure ;
What souls possess themselves so pure,
Oh ! is there blessedness like theirs ?

" But let us hope as long as we can. If our dread is realised, young Charters will still be a pleasant memory and if one could be found to tell his story rightly, I am sure it would be inspiring."

From that time to this no detail that could throw light on the fate of these two men has turned up.

Many and many an anxious enquiry was made. While the district was being opened up, men kept in mind the strange disappearance of these two, so oddly thrown

together in their fate, but no trace was found. Twenty years after, during the Great War, when fighting went on over this part of Africa a rumour went round that unmistakable evidence of the remains of Mr. Colquhoun and Dr. Charters had been found. The truth about this is given in a letter from C. W. Hobley, C.M.G., who was Chief Political Officer with the Expeditionary Force in British East Africa in 1914 :—

(*September 2nd*, 1923.)

" I knew Dr. Charters and was in East Africa at the time of his disappearance ; it was a tragic affair and caused a great sensation at the time, for it was so mysterious. I myself passed through the area between Kibwezi and M'kindu River about a fortnight after Dr. Charters' disappearance ; I was accompanying Mr. J. Martin to Uganda and we had over 300 men with us. We left the Uganda track and camped at the upper M'kindu Camp to which Dr. Charters had sent on his porters. We spent two days at this spot and sent out our men in all directions, to search for traces, and I and two other officers accompanied small parties to insure that a wide area was covered. Our efforts however had no result.

" With regard to the rumours which cropped up in the war ; a British patrol was I believe scouting for information regarding the whereabouts of German patrols or raiding parties, and they went into the jungle which covers a big lava sheet which descends from the Kyulu Hills, and they found relics of some persons who had come to grief there in the shape of water-bottles and other odds and ends which may have belonged to a European ; people who remembered Dr. Charters

thought that these things might be connected with his loss, but there was nothing, so far as I know, by which their ownership could be identified. A Greek trader disappeared in that locality some years later (than Charters) and of course these things might have been relics of that disaster. Unfortunately the patrol brought none of the articles back for examination."

One word more from Dr. Macnicol, of Poona, a fellow-student of Charters.

(*August*, 1923.)

" I remember reading his last letter to me and how but a few days after its arrival there was a brief message in the Indian papers stating that ' Dr. Charters and a companion had gone out hunting and had not been seen again. He was not, for God took him.'

" ' *Dulce et decorum est pro patriâ mori*,' he had quoted to us as the last words of a friend who passed away on the Congo. His life was equally brief, but full of high purpose and endeavour. He, too, met his death for the sake of that Kingdom which he ever laboured to bring in, and for that Country which he longed to see."

CHAPTER XVI

THE FULL TREE AT KIKUYU

On the 27th of August, 1898, David Charters' anticipations were fulfilled, and Mr. Watson, who alone remained of all the strenuous and gallant band who had been through the desperate pioneer years, was transferred to Kikuyu where a site had already been selected for the Mission. It will be remembered that Kikuyu had been from the beginning the objective for the Mission station, but the members of the original expedition were unable to penetrate so far, and stopped two-thirds of the way at Kibwezi, where the beauty of the country promised success to their inexperienced minds. But the place was ill-suited to Europeans, and in the rains was very unhealthy, added to which the population around was sparse and widely scattered, so that much of the force expended by these devoted men was wasted in the open as it were.

It was not until some years later that the other part of Charters' surmise came true, and the Mission was handed over to the Church of Scotland.

For the first four months in Kikuyu, Mr. Watson toiled alone, going through all the routine work of settlement that he had seen, seven years before, so hopefully faced at Kibwezi ; since then many comrades had passed on to other duties in other parts of the Continent, some were laid to rest, and one, the most ener-

getic of all, Charters, had disappeared into the void. But even at Kikuyu, work had to be repeated, for the first site there proved unsuitable, and the building had to be begun all over again about a mile away. It is these set-backs that, more than any actual preaching and teaching, take the pith out of a man, and render him liable to succumb to the weakening effects of a tropical climate. However Mr. Watson built himself a house, of brick too, the bricks having been made by his own hands, and to this, in December, 1899, he brought his bride. A month or two later the school was started with seven pupils.

Only a year after his marriage Mr. Watson succumbed to pneumonia, but his admirable choice of a helpmate was shown by the fact that Mrs. Watson remained, and has been ever since one of the most active and trustworthy members of the Mission. For ten months after being left a widow indeed, she carried on practically alone, as her only coadjutor, Mr. Paterson, had to attend to industrial work a mile and a half away.

It was after Mr. Watson's death that the Directors decided the work could be better organised by some established body instead of being run as an independent Mission as it had been. The negotiations were long drawn out. But from this time the Church of Scotland undertook the management, and from 1903 shared the financial responsibility. It was not until 1907 that the actual transfer was completed. The Mission has grown and flourished to an extent which could hardly have been believed by those who first wended their way from the coast through an unknown country to carry the good news to a strange people, whose tongue they could not speak, and had no means of learning except

orally. In the words of the Semi-Jubilee book issued in 1923, " Village after village has heard of the fame of the ' Readers,' and joined in the demand for teachers. The mind of the Kikuyu has awakened. A door has been opened for it into the vast treasure-house of knowledge, and multitudes are hastening to enter in. Twenty-five years ago this same people did not know of the existence of the alphabet.

" On the medical side the achievements of the Mission rival those of the educational. The power of the witch-doctor, a more terrible curse than slavery, has been to a large extent undermined. The superstition which led to the casting out of the sick and dying to hyenas has been all but destroyed. The dangers that attend maternity both to mother and child have been largely mitigated. Hundreds of young lives have been rescued from premature death. Relief has been brought to tens of thousands of sufferers from yaws and other diseases. The ravages of epidemics such as small-pox, influenza and cerebral meningitis have been stayed, and many degrading customs have been broken."

Kikuyu has been spoken of as " The Mission of World renown," and this is true, though possibly the Kikuyu controversy, which became known by name to many who had not the least idea what it was about, helped to spread the knowledge of this place. It needed no such notoriety to spread its fame, for it is indeed a model mission well worth visiting.

Not far off is the station of Limoru, and a hundred miles away that of Tumu-tumu, and still farther, under the slopes of Mount Kenya that of Chogoria.

Hospitals, schools, churches, have been opened, and spread light and healing, but we have little to do in this

book with all this. The thought that remains is of one of the earliest pioneers who died while only thirty, and who is not even mentioned in the Mission Semi-Jubilee book.

David Charters was of a diffident nature and he had to fight against his own diffidence and teach himself to assume that authority which is necessary in dealing with untutored races. This was a great effort to him, and took from him something of vitality. He was also extremely sensitive, and impatient of interruption when his mind was set on anything. In both of these weak places he was wounded continually in his work. His sensitiveness made an agony to him of daily sights and scenes that a more phlegmatic man would have taken in his stride. His longing to go ahead in the acquirement of the language in which to communicate with the people, and to carry on the work for which he had had such a weary training, and had sacrificed so much, was daily thwarted by having to fetch and carry, work at the erecting of buildings, and help in pure manual labour. These were in the nature of interruptions he considered. He was very young, and, in spite of his West African experience, extremely fresh and boyish. He remained a boy to the end. If he could have seen coming the abrupt close to his earthly life, and the call to that higher work waiting for him above, no doubt he would have realised—what those who have seen his end realise—that this medley of odd up-and-down jobs *was* his life's work, a schooling for the something better above.

Yet in spite of all his discouragement, boyishly expressed to his great friends the Fletts, he never " let go," and that might be his epitaph. He never " let go,"

and but for him the Mission work might have been subsequently carried on much less brilliantly than it was. The seed was sown in those days of thwarted endeavour, and what seemed "small things" at Kibwezi. The glorious fruit is now being garnered in the well-staffed and well attended Mission at Kikuyu. Very few of those who now work there, doctors, teachers, preachers, carpenters, skilled agriculturists, have even heard the name of David Charters, who had to be all these at once in his own person.

The Kikuyu Mission might be better called the Kenya Mission, for no less than five mission stations are extended over that gigantic colony. The present Head is Dr. Arthur, who, as a Medical Missionary, joined the staff in 1906. In 1915, when in Scotland, he received ordination.

In September, 1920, the Presbytery of Kenya Colony was formed. Up to this time the difficulty had been that though the church was Presbyterian in name, there were no Kirk-sessions. Now one has been formed at Kikuyu itself, and another at Tumu-Tumu, and these are linked up with the Kirk-session at Nairobi. At first purely European in the character of its representatives, the next steps were rapidly taken, and Elders were chosen from responsible men among the native converts.

From Dr. Arthur we learn that the wild Masai are still outside the sphere of Kikuyu. But the African Inland Mission is working among them, and they make excellent preachers and teachers, one of whom has just completed the translation of the entire New Testament into Masai.

Kikuyu, as well as Kibwezi, is on the line of the

Uganda railway, which Charters never ceased to talk of and look for. This line was completed in 1903, having been begun in 1896, and its opening brought many settlers for the higher and more healthy places around Nairobi. The whole character of the country has therefore been changed. The nature of the territory through which the railway had to pass may be gauged by the fact that it cost £9,000 a mile to build. It has a total length of 600 miles, and will ever be associated with the romantic story of the Man-eaters who preyed upon those who were creating it.

The line runs up from the coast through thick jungle with occasional plantations of bananas, rubber, cotton and maize. After leaving this, the vast summit of snow-capped Kilimanjaro, rising 19,000 ft., is seen, and then the ground after a section of parched plain, rises to the rolling plateau which forms one of the most famous game reserves in the world; "a Zoological Gardens let loose," as it has been described.

Kikuyu is distant some 340 miles from the coast, and 240 from Lake Victoria Nyanza. It, like Kibwezi, is close to the Equator, but the whole district is at a height of from 4,000 to 8,000 feet, and the land is very fertile.

The line goes on to Nairobi, the capital of Kenya, standing over 5,000 feet high, with a population of over 24,000. Thence, through dense elephant forests, it proceeds to the huge inland sea, 17,000 square miles in extent, and reaches its terminus at Port Florence.

The last word to say is that Kikuyu stands for Unity and not Controversy. It was at the Kikuyu Conference that the idea of complete unity among African Missions was started, and this, carried into effect, forms one of the

soundest foundations for Missionary work ever laid down in any continent. Would that David Charters, the eager, most human-hearted young Baptist pioneer, whose views were ever broad in religious questions, could have known that this splendid enlargement would follow on his strenuous endeavours to do his duty.

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